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THE LIFE

OF

MARTIN VAN BUREN,

HEIR-APPARENT TO THE "GOVERNMENT,"
AND THE APPOINTED SUCCESSOR OF
GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON.

CONTAINING

EVERY AUTHENTIC PARTICULAR BY WHICH HIS EXTRAORDINARY CHARACTER HAS BEEN FORMED.

WITH

A CONCISE HISTORY

OF THE

EVENTS THAT HAVE OCCASIONED HIS UNPARALLELED ELEVATION; TOGETHER WITH A REVIEW OF HIS POLICY AS A STATESMAN.

"Good Lord! what is VAN!—for though simple he looks,
Tis a task to unravel his looks and his crooks;
With his depths and his shallows, his good and his evil,
All in all, he's a *Riddle* must puzzle the devil."

BY DAVID CROCKETT.

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PREFACE.

STATESMEN are gamesters, and the people are the cards they play with. And it is curious to see how good the comparison holds as to all the games, the shuffling, and the tricks performed with them sort of books, as they are sometimes called. From "*three up*" to "*whist*," from a "*constable*" to a "*president*," the hands are always dealing out; and in both cases, the way they cut and shuffle is a surprise to all young beginners.

The present "government" has been a great sportsman in his time; and he has played at both games with equal success: and not content with his own good luck, he is actually giving *item* in favour of another, and has so shuffled and stocked the *cards*, that unless we can *cut* the *pack* in the the *right place*, he will turn up a *Jack* upon the country.

I have gone fur enough on this hook to show what I mean: the people are tricked and cheated, and what is worse, they are satisfied to stay so. If any one tells them that they are used by political

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gamblers as a blacksmith uses his tongs, they fly into a passion, and say it is all a trick to abuse Jackson. If you ask them what it is that makes Van Buren fit for a president, and why it is that General Jackson has appointed him for his *successor*, they answer, "he has been persecuted for Jackson's sake." Jackson, they say, has done enough, not only to reign himself as long as he wants to, but to say who shall reign after him. But the good of this joke is, these same people call themselves democratic republicans! *Republicans!* unable to choose for themselves, and consenting to give that right to a single individual. What think you of that?

We read that when the democratic republicans of France gave Bonaparte the privilege to nominate his successor, they became ashamed of their name, for it was too barefaced to keep it up after that; and they called themselves the dutiful subjects of that glorification hero. I make one reflection right here: if any member of the convention that formed the constitution had proposed that the president should appoint his successor, the motion would have been scouted out of the House; and yet that principle is now about to be acted out, in full blast, in the case of Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren. It cannot be denied. It is need-

less to say it is done by the *will* of the people; law is nothing but the *will* of the people. The only difference is, the last goes through certain forms, and becomes fixed for a time; but if it is a good principle as between President Jackson and Van Buren, it is equally so as between all future presidents and their *pets*, and ought to be carried into a law. Now, as little as people think of this matter, if this principle was grafted on our constitution, it would change the whole character of the government; and instead of a republic, it would be a right-down monarchy, and nothing else; and things ought to be called by their right name. There would not be left a democratic republican upon the face of the earth in all America. That fine party name that has gulled, now gulls, and will gull thousands of people, would have to give place to another catch-word. Wonder what Maine and New Hampshire would do for their word "*democracy.*" It would scatter 'em for a while; but I rather think they would rally under another of quite a different meaning—one that meant submission; showing a first-rate willingness not to think for themselves, but to be ready to go or do, where or whatever a leader or deputy-leader might point or plan.

I say, then, it is in vain to deny that if Van

Buren is elected, it is wholly and solely upon the strength of General Jackson's popularity, and his having the good fortune to be selected by the old gentleman as his successor. He nor his friends plead no merit in himself; there is no manner of good thing in him, and that he has no earthly chance of reaching the presidential chair but in and through the "greatest and best." What has he done that entitles him to such distinction? His friends are so conscious that the people everywhere look upon him with a jealous eye, that they are either afraid or ashamed to come out with his name openly. Look at the Van Burenites in Virginia, where Rives and Ritchie are trying to smuggle him in upon the people. They won't come out flat-footed for him, but are moving on tip-toe, to catch the people a napping, and by-and-by they will hurra for Van Buren as the candidate of the *great republican party*, nominated by the Baltimore packed convention, and that the democratic republicans must support him, to keep from dividing the party. In North Carolina it is the same thing; although the office-holders and their friends intend to support Van Buren with all their might, yet they pretend they will leave the whole matter to a caucus at Baltimore, and yet they won't send anybody there who will not first pledge him-

self for Van Buren. What sort of a convention is this; filled with no other sort of delegates but whole-hog Van Buren men? Why don't the managers who send representatives to the convention, nominate him themselves? They might as well do it as instruct their representatives to do it. Where is the difference? No; they know better; they know that Van ain't the choice of the people, no how, nor of his *whole* party; and they are afraid to try his chance single-handed, in the states; they want the mutual support of several states, backed by the all-powerful influence of Old Hickory. Hence you see the Enquirer, the Globe, the Albany Argus, and all the little fry, coming out and saying that Judge White's offering is in opposition to General Jackson's administration. Now, what has General Jackson's administration to do with the next president? Don't this prove that Van Buren is General Jackson's appointed successor, and that White's daring to offer is in opposition to Jackson's wishes? Don't it show that the people must not think or even talk about choosing anybody but the man selected by General Jackson's administration? And who is General Jackson's administration? Why everybody knows it is none but the office-holders; they have got the government in their hands, and there they intend to keep it.

And the way they intend to keep it is by getting a president they can manage as they have old General Jackson. And the way they intend to get a president is by getting up a caucus at Baltimore, filled with, and elected by, men of their own stamp. They intend to call this meeting a convention of the democratic republicans, and proclaim with a loud voice that whoever they nominate must be supported by the *whole* republican party, well knowing that Van Buren will be nominated, because their tools were sent there for that purpose, and that alone. Who else has ever been spoken of but Van Buren to be presented to that convention? Has not every delegation or member yet chosen, been positively instructed to vote for Van Buren? And who are these delegates elected by? Does any one dare to say it is by the people at large? Does more than one man in a thousand know any thing about it? Is any time and place specified, and the legal voters for the president invited to attend and choose a representative to go to Baltimore to nominate a president for them? I call upon the people in general to ask themselves the following questions: Who authorized these delegates to dictate to us who we should vote for as president? When did we appoint them for this purpose? When and where

did we attend to appoint these delegates? Now, a satisfactory answer to these simple questions will soon show whether Mr. Martin Van Buren is selected by the people as a candidate; and if he is not, let us hear no more about his being nominated by a convention of the people. I can tell you who appoints these conventioners—a postmaster, a by-authority printer, or some such understrapper to the kitchen cabinet, and about one dozen *roudies*, who can always be pressed into any service when there is liquor; and then this goes forth to the world as an appointment made by the great democratic republican party. I know an appointment made by a meeting in one of the states, where there was but nine men besides the president and secretary; and this delegate was to represent seventy thousand persons. Call you this republicanism? Wonder where such republicanism come from! It ain't Tennessee notions; and if it didn't come from Maine or New Hampshire—both great states for democracy—it must have come from New York, where they don't count *units, tens, hundreds*, &c., as they do in ciphering; but where they count *one* man for a *thousand.*

I want to make another reflection at this place. Suppose a member of Congress should propose, at the next session, an amendment to the constitu-

tion, providing for the better appointment of the president and vice-president, requiring that the office-holders in the federal government, being the leaders and gainers of the party in power, should have the nomination of those officers; and that it should be done by their directing little squads of *petty-place* men to assemble the *grog-shop* politicians at any time and place they might think proper, to choose a delegate to meet in Baltimore, to nominate, not a man from any given number of candidates, but a certain individual then and there named by these aforesaid little squads, and which they are ashamed to propose openly to the people in the state where they appoint their delegate, expecting to cram him down the people's throats by force of party drill. Does any man believe for one moment that such a proposition would go down; would be listened to for a single instant? And yet this is going to be the future mode of appointing our president, through all time, unless the good hard sense of the people set their faces against it. Will they not do it? Will they consent to a practice which they would blush to see put into our constitution? Why, the election of the president was and is a matter of more concern than all the other things put together in our government. To have that straight and square, cost more pains and

solid work than all the other framing in the constitution put together; and now, forsooth, this great officer, upon which the very *gumtion* of the government depends, is to be chosen by the very scurf of creation, the very men—the office-holders and office-hunters—that was guarded against by the framers of the constitution, as likely to have too much influence in his election!

Now this contrivance is about to be brought in play in favour of the little gentleman whose political life I am about to give to the public; and it is thought to be more necessary, as he is to have an opponent from his own party of equal talents, and ten thousand times more honesty. The office-holders see his danger, and they are moving heaven and earth to beat off this opponent, who, by-the-by, is a full team harness of the broad strap, and well reined up. The matter is all arranged; the appointment of delegates is going on; the time and place is appointed; and Van Buren is to be nominated—no one daring to think of, much less mention, another candidate—by an unanimous vote of the convention. Nay, the cunning scheme has come to that part of the show where the "greatest and best" makes his appearance on the stage, to give effect to the whole play. In a late letter which General Jackson's keepers have made him

write to some reverend somebody in Tennessee, the whole matter is come out. For a man that has as much resolution and fight in him as General Jackson, there never was one in any part of creation that was so easy to be duped. A child, much less such artful skunks as he has about him, may impose upon him, and make him do any thing they wish, if it is not openly dishonourable, by just praising his battles, or abusing his enemies. He is all passion; does nothing from judgment; moves right on from the first strong feeling, and this is kindled in a minute, by just touching the strings above mentioned. His ruling passion is revenge. Some people think he acts from friendship; but there is no greater mistake. If he serves anybody, it is to injure an enemy. Could his heart be opened and read, all his friendship for Van Buren —and it is greater for him than anybody in the world—arises from his hatred to Calhoun; and the letter above referred to proves that fact, and shows that he is about to give up an old, long-tried, faithful friend, Judge White, who stuck to him through all his tribulations; helped to raise his fortunes from the beginning; adventurers together in a new country; friends in youth and in old age; fought together in the same battles; risked the same dangers; starved together in the same

deserts, merely to gratify this revengeful feeling. And this is plain to every thinking man, because they must see that Van Buren is as opposite to General Jackson as dung is to a diamond. Jackson is open, bold, warm-hearted, confiding, and passionate to a fault. Van Buren is secret, sly, selfish, cold, calculating, distrustful, treacherous; and if he could gain an object just as well by openness as intrigue, he would choose the latter. Now, how can such men sort together, if it is not accounted for upon some passion stronger than all the rest that usually regulates the conduct of men? Yes, and this passion is revenge. It hears nothing, sees nothing, feels nothing, behind or beyond the killing stone dead of its enemy.

Now let us go back to the letter. General Jackson is made to say by his managers to this aforesaid preacher, "You are at liberty to say, ON ALL OCCASIONS, that, regarding the people as the true source of power, I am always ready to bow to their will [Oh, how submissive!] and to their judgment; that, discarding all *personal preferences*, I consider it the *true policy* of the friends of republican principles, *to send delegates fresh* from the people, to a GENERAL CONVENTION, for the purpose of selecting candidates for the presidency and vice-presidency; and that to *impeach*

that election, before it is made, or to *resist it* when it is fairly made, as an emanation of executive power, is to *assail* the *virtue* of the *people*, and, in effect, *to oppose* their right to *govern*."

Any man whose sense allows of his going at large, will see, when he comes to look right close at this matter, that General Jackson could not have more effectually *dictated* to the people who they should elect as president, than if he had said "Oh yes" three times to all the good people of the Union, and then have proclaimed that "it is the will and pleasure of Andrew Jackson that Martin Van Buren be chosen his successor to the high office of President of these United States; hereof, fail not, under the penalty of treason." Now let us examine the case. For six years back, the Jackson party has had no other person in keeping for the presidency but Martin Van Buren. For the last two years, he has been the exclusive candidate, all the leaders of his party yielding to him an undisputed right to the field. But the people not altogether liking so well his character and his principles, knowing nothing good of him, and always hearing his name mentioned in connexion with tricks and juggling, they have determined to start a candidate of their own, independent of the office-holders. All at once the wire-drawers get

into a prodigious fidget about a *convention;* and they must have a candidate nominated by a *convention.* The man they have all along held up as their candidate, and who, they yet intend, shall be the only candidate on their side, must submit his pretensions to a *convention* of democratic republicans, no one daring to oppose him. Well, a *convention* is resolved upon; time and place appointed; delegates chosen, pledged to vote for no one but Van Buren; the thing just as positively fixed, and the end secured, as if he had been nominated two years ago, when they first fairly started him: and then, behold, General Jackson, at the very nick of time when the project is all ripe, knowing his power and the servility of his blind followers, is made to come out to a reverend preacher, *in all humility* to the people, *bowing* to their will and judgment, *discarding* all *personal preferences,* (by-the-by, if I have ever known General Jackson guilty of right down hypocrisy, here is the very instance, too plain to be overlooked,) and saying that he wished it mentioned on *"all occasions,"* that HE considers it the *true policy* to *send delegates* FRESH from the people to a *general convention,* for the purpose of selecting candidates for the *presidency* and vice-presidency; and this, after he knows such convention is packed and stocked to nominate Martin Van

Buren, the delegates all chosen and instructed to do that very thing. Can any thing be more barefaced? And yet the people will pretend they do not understand all this. And as if the above was not enough to make the people stand up to their rack, he adds, "to *impeach* that election before it is made, or to *resist* it after it is made, is to *assail* the virtue of the people, and to *oppose* their right to govern." Now, good reader, are you sufficiently acquainted with the history of politics for the last eight years, to remember that at the first election of General Jackson, he and all his friends went dead against a *convention*, that they broke it down, and he was himself actually elected against this very "*true policy*" of "*fresh delegates*" to a "general convention"? What will honest people think of such unblushing inconsistency? Is there no shame in the world? Indeed, it would seem so, for nothing is too deceitful, now-a-days, to be used for political purposes. The people would not submit to a caucus—which is only another name for convention—in the case of Mr. Crawford; and it was fast going down to infamy until Van Buren and his friends revived it. In the second term of General Jackson, when he was unopposed by any one of his own party, (for caucuses are only intended to settle disputes between

rivals of the same party,) when, by reason of serving one term, the honour of which he had acquired without a convention, it was looked for that he would try another—when, in fine, a convention was wholly unnecessary, so far as General Jackson was concerned—what does Van Buren and his friends do, but gets up a convention to nominate himself for vice-president, and a candidate for president that was already out, and known to every man, woman, and child in the nation. And what was all this for? Why, merely to re-establish the old instrument, so successfully used in New York tactics, of caucuses. This was to serve as a precedent when he was to be brought upon the field: and now, a mode of electing candidates, contrary to the spirit of our government, opposed to the interest of the small states, employed by a handful of interested and designing men, in which not one in one thousand of the people have any agency, regulated and conducted by office-holders, which General Jackson himself disapproved and reprobated six years ago, and over which he triumphed —is the *true policy* to be pursued by the "friends of republican principles"! Wonderful!

I have been led into these remarks by the facts which will hereafter be presented in the life of the individual I am about to write, and which have had

such a singular influence in producing the present unhappy condition of the country. The following pages will show, that with all our bragging about the principles of our republican government, our government has no principles at all; and that one little man, without talents, and what is worse, without honesty, backed by office-holders, using the power and the money of the government; who is a federalist to-day, a republican to-morrow, and a hypocrite always; yet such a man can have the huzzas of the multitude splitting the air at every court-house in the nation. He may be against internal improvements out of New York, and yet get the *West*, that can alone live by it. He may be in favour of the tariff, and yet get Maine and New Hampshire, that have always gone, or pretended to go, their death against it. He may be against the bank, and yet get Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey, that want it more, and are more benefited by it, than any states in the Union. But what is worse than all, he may be for internal improvement in his own great state, for the tariff, for a bank in New York, for abolition, and yet get the whole South, (with the exception of our gallant little state,) Virginia at their head, that has made so much fuss about state rights, strict construction, state sovereignty; and broke down one adminis-

tration by her uproar, and now is about to build up another precisely upon the same doctrines. Can a government have principles that has so little solid conduct as this; that has two ways for every thing it does, and both those ways exactly opposite?

The life of Van Buren, if it receives the consideration it deserves, if the people will give it the close thinking it needs, will be the most useful lesson they have ever read since they began the A, B, C of our government. They will see what great things come from little ones; they will see how parties are formed and carried through the *manual* exercise among the *treasury-chests;* the *wheelings* and *turnings, in* and *out* of office; the marchings and counter-marchings, to secure the high *places*; the forming and displaying column, to surround and protect the *baggage wagons.* They will see that one set of principles last no longer than to serve a purpose; and that their dead opposite will be taken up, in broad daylight, to put down the first: and people will hold up their heads under such barefaced inconsistency, not only without a wry face, but without as much *red* on their cheeks as there is *blood* in a turnip.

Many persons will take up this book with an expectation that they will be very much amused at my odd expressions, and hope to find a number

THE LIFE

OF

MARTIN VAN BUREN.

THE greatest thing in creation is *curiosity*. We are taught that it damned a world. And if the "Gin'ral," and Black Hawk, and ME were to travel through the United States, we would bring out, no matter what kind of weather, more people to see us than any other three persons out of fifteen millions of souls now living in the United States. And what would it be for? As I am one of the persons mentioned, I believe I won't push this question any further. What I am driving at is this: when a man rises from a low degree, and gets into a rank that he ain't use to, far above his old neighbours,—whether he rises by his talents or his tricks, his decency or his deceit,—such a man starts the *curiosity* of the world to know how he has got along, more than any other character in

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all nature. Now I need not go any further for an example than to ME and Mr. Van Buren; we both come from nothing; and we both prove that if the people were as cute as they are curious, they wouldn't find so much to admire in us as the fuss they make about us would seem to justify. There is this much, however, can be said in our favour, if there is nothing to boast of; it isn't our fault if the people make themselves fools about us; the more they honour us, the more ridiculous they make themselves. The folly and mischief which *curiosity* produces is not so criminal as that of *malice*, but it is equally fatal. We have had one president put upon us because he made himself a subject of curiosity, from one fortunate battle: and this remark will not be thought envious, if any one will take the trouble to ask and answer to himself this question: Would he, from either his talents or former course of life, have ever been thought of for president, but for the victory of New Orleans? Would I ever have been spoken of for the same high office, but for my fighting under this same great "Gin'ral," which so raised my popularity, it threw a *bear hunter* from the swamps of the forest into a hair-bottom chair, in the halls of Congress. And great as this change might seem to be, General Jackson will tell you it was

no greater than his, or as little expected or deserved. I, too, have been nominated for president, and with as much seriousness as Van Buren was at first; for everybody recollects what a laugh was set up everywhere, but more especially in Georgia, when Van, by Mr. Crawford's influence, was *only nominated* for *vice-president*. The party opposed to Mr. Crawford in that state—I think they called them the Clark party—made all the game they could at it. They used to vote for him for doorkeeper to the General Assembly, and call him on their tickets "Whiskey Van;" and now this same party goes for him for president!!

I mention these things to show what curiosity will do, and that if accident or any thing else ever jostles a man out of the path nature put him in, from that moment the crowd rushes round him, like a fight in a court-yard, and they never quit him till they make a great man *of him*, and a fool of *themselves*. Such will be found to be the case of Martin Van Buren, whose life and character I am now about to give.

MARTIN VAN BUREN was born in the year 1781, at KINDERHOOK, on the banks of the far-famed Hudson, the river of steamboats and high banks, in the state of New York. He is about fifty-three

years old; and notwithstanding his baldness, which reaches all round and over half down his head, like a white pitch plaster, leaving a few white floating locks, he is only three years older than I am. His face is a good deal shrivelled, and he looks sorry, not for any thing he has gained, but what he may lose. This, perhaps, is owing to the *chase* in which he is now and long has been engaged. The *curs* of the bank, and the office-hunting *hounds* of opposition, keep constantly on the *scent* of him, and though he *doubles* in one place, and *tacks back* in another, which occasionally throws them off the *track*, yet the old *hunters* fully understand him, and soon get into *full cry* again.

There is a curious likeness in the life and present standing of Mr. Van Buren and me; and our case must hold out encouraging hopes to all sorts of people; for, after *our* good luck and that of the "Gin'ral's," nobody need doubt the ignorance of mankind, or the ease with which they can be duped.

Mr. Van Buren's parents were humble, plain, and not much troubled with book knowledge; and so were mine. His father hung out his sign on a post, with a daub on it, intended for a horse, and with the words "*entertainment for man and horse;*" so did mine: for both kept little village

taverns. He has become a great man without any good reason for it; and so have I. He has been nominated for president without the least pretensions; and so have I. But here the similarity stops: from his cradle he was of the *non-committal* tribe; I never was. He had always two ways to do a thing; I never had but one. He was gene rally half bent; I tried to be as straight as a gun-barrel. He couldn't bear his rise; I never minded mine. He forgot all his old associates because they were poor folks; I stuck to the people that made me. I would not have mentioned his origin, be cause I like to see people rise from nothing; but when they try to hide it, I think it ought to be thrown up to them; for a man that hasn't soul enough to own the friends that have started him, and to acknowledge the means by which he has climbed into notice, ought once-in-a-while to be reminded of the mire in which he used to wallow; and I shall take occasion hereafter to speak of the style in which he now moves.

He has no pedigree that I can trace back farther than his sire. During the war of the revolution, his father was considered on the *Whig* side, while his uncle, his father's brother, was a *Tory*, and it was said, occasionally aided, as a guide to British scouting parties. I state this fact merely to show

the *breed.* As my friend Colonel Benton would say, this breed has always two *hooks* hung out, on one or the other of which they are likely to catch something, in *beating* up, or in *drifting* down. I rather think, by way of reflection, that whoever gets hung on one of Mr. Van Buren's hooks will be as sick of it as senator Benton declared he was of the hook on which Mr. Webster hung him up in June last.

Neither Mr. Van Buren nor me had much education; but he is none the worse for that, if he don't pretend to more than he knows. A man should never brag of his knowledge; and therefore I always let my writings, and speeches, and sayings do that for me, without ever hinting at such a thing. Self-educated men, that make a figure in the world, like what Mr. Van Buren and me have done, ought to have a great share of modesty; and consequently, I have declined two nominations for president. But Mr. Van Buren ain't proof against these dazzling shines held out to him; he lacks diffidence. He stands well with himself, and thinks if he ain't fit for the office, he can make the people believe he is.

The world is generally curious to know, when they read the life of a great man, what kind of a boy he was; whether he gave early signs of what

he has turned out to be. About this there are many rumours; but as I do not wish to deal in the marvellous, my readers must excuse me if I decline giving any of the prodigies of my hero in his youth, especially as authentic. I do not wish to risk the credibility of my narrative, by relating any of these wonders as true. For instance, it is said that at a year old he could laugh on one side of his face and cry on the other, at one and the same time; and so by his eating, after he was weaned, he could chew his bread and meat separately on the opposite sides of his mouth; plainly showing, as all the old women said, that he had a *turn* for any thing. While at school, he was remarkable for his aptness; and it is said—but I do not vouch for the truth of the report—that at six years old he could actually tell when his book was wrong end upwards; and at twelve, he could read it just as well *up-side-down* as *right-side-up*, and that he practised it both ways, to acquire a shifting *nack* for business, and a ready turn for doing things more ways than one. All this, however, I give as mere rumour, not doubting, as in the case of most great men, these wonderful exploits in boyhood are manufactured to meet their fame when they become great: and I now specially

inform the public that there was nothing remarkable *in me* throughout all my youth.

What little education Mr. Van Buren got, he got it honestly, and always behaved himself with great propriety, never being accused of taking any thing secretly from his school-mates. While others were breaking open trunks, and stealing their comrades' money, nothing of that kind was ever brought to his charge; so that whatever other faults he may have, no such thing as this can be flung up to him at this day; and it is to be hoped there never will be a candidate for the high office of president, against whom such a slur can be brought, for it is an old saying, that "what is bred in the bone is hard to come out of the flesh."

Mr. Van Buren became a politician at an early period of his life, and has pushed it as a *trade*, from the beginning to the present hour; and no man has done a better business. He has met with as few losses and bad debts in his *dealings*, as any adventurer that ever commenced *bartering;* but he never believed in the doctrine "that honesty was the best policy," and now thinks the maxim entirely falsified in his success. To *his* notion, *principle* had nothing to do with *traffic* of any kind; and he is astonished when any person talks

to him of the impropriety of two prices to things, of two kinds of weights and *measures*, of altering the quality of articles, and shifting their places, if necessary, as often as a man's interest may dictate. His rule is, as there is no "friendship in trade," so there is none in *politics*.

Until the year 1812, Mr. Van Buren was not elected to any office, though he was always a seeker, holding some petty place in the county, from which he kept a constant look-out. There is another difference between us here:—While he was a hunter of bread through an office, I was a hunter of bears through the woods: while he was *nosing* his game among the grog-shops in the town, I was scenting (to borrow an idea from a poet) the wild deer on the sunny hills of the woodlands; and I have now the comfort to believe, if it has turned me out less fame, it has taken nothing from my honesty.

A pleasant anecdote is related of him when he was quite young. It is truly like him, and planted the principle upon which he has acted ever since. A warmly-contested election was coming on, and the friends on both sides, being men of influence, used great exertions, and became much excited; our hero applied to quite a knowing politician for his opinion as to the result. The answer express-

ing much doubt, young Martin, casting his eyes wishfully towards the ground, said, "I do wish I knew which party would succeed, as I want to take a side, but don't like to be in the minority."

He studied politics in the school of a Mr. *Rial*, a tobacconist. This man lived in the same town with Van Buren, and generally took him along, when he went to Coxackie, a small village on the opposite side of the river, to electioneer. Rial was a great *bottle* orator, but not the man for making set, or rather Congress speeches. He has now removed to the city of New York, and there employs himself in the evening, at some porter-house, relating the precepts he inculcated upon young Van. The scholar is said to be altogether worthy of the master. There is no doubt Rial did much for Van, but says he was always a *slippery* fellow.

In April, 1812, Van Buren was elected a member of the senate of the state legislature of New York.

During the autumn and winter of 1811 (and as I am now going into facts, I wish the reader's particular attention to dates, and defy all contradiction of my statements) the question of war and no war with Great Britain was talked of throughout the whole country. The British party denounced, in terms the most implacable, the friends of war;

they were particularly furious and malicious against Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison, as the prime movers of the quarrel with Great Britain.

In March, 1813, Mr. Madison's time of service as president would expire; and in November, 1812, electors of president and vice-president were to be chosen.

In the winter of 1811 and the spring of 1812 the British party, uniting with certain leaders who claimed to belong to the democratic party, became so strong that serious fears were entertained by Mr. Madison's friends that he would be defeated in New York. It was at this time, April, 1812, that Van Buren was elected a senator. He was known to have no fixed principles; and young as he was in politics, he had already given signs that though he might be straight, yet he was none the worse for being watched; and under this not very creditable notion, the democratic or Madisonian party elected him, believing he would act with them and sustain their measures.

During the summer of 1812, the federal, or peace party did every thing in their power to destroy the popularity of Mr. Madison, and to prevent his election, on account of his having recommended the war.

In June of that year, as everybody recollects,

war was declared, and Mr. De Witt Clinton, from a nomination just made before, became the candidate of the federal party, in opposition to Mr. Madison. He was nominated at a *caucus* (the famous method of managing things in New York, and which Mr. Van Buren and the New York Regency are trying, by a Baltimore convention, to fix down upon the federal government, to serve the future purposes of the great Empire State) in Albany, on the 29th of May, 1812. Mr. Madison was the regularly nominated candidate of the democratic or war party, as the federalists called them, by a congressional caucus, which, notwithstanding General Jackson thinks it is the "*true policy*," has been properly put down by the good sense of the people, because there is but one way to choose the president, and that is pointed out in the constitution. Mr. Van Buren opposed this nomination, as I will clearly show, though he now thinks one at Baltimore will be right.

Immediately after the declaration of war in June, the federal party in Van Buren's county, by his special recommendation and personal contrivance, held a meeting. James A. Hamilton, the intimate friend and counsellor of Van Buren at that time—and, as will be shown hereafter, the same down to the present day, with the additional

character of being a secret and confidential instrument in some of his master strokes of conjuration—took a full-team part in that meeting, and managed it altogether up to his directions.

On the 8th of July (mark the dates) the federalists published their address and resolutions. They were signed by the aforesaid Hamilton, and others of his and Van Buren's creed of politics. The following is one of their resolutions:

"*Resolved*, that the war is *impolitic, unnecessary*, and *disastrous;* and that to employ the militia in an offensive war (that is, to enter Canada) is unconstitutional." Such were the doctrines of the Van Buren party in those days; and yet, this man and his followers, afterwards, had the hardihood to assail Mr. Clinton and others as federalists and opponents of the war. Though this meeting was got up by Van Buren for the secret purpose of promoting Mr. Clinton's, and defeating Mr. Madison's prospects as to the presidency; and the inexpediency of the war, as it was hoped, was artfully selected to play upon the prejudices of the peace-loving people, to serve that infamous purpose; yet at a future day it was found entirely convenient to forge all this, and brand Mr. Clinton as an enemy of Mr. Madison and the war. Don't this look a *little* like a magician?

During the summer of 1812, the *Van Buren papers*—and mind, I do not mean the open and acknowledged federal papers, for there was a clear difference between them, and so known and confessed at the time—continued to attack the war party with great violence. Let the reader bear in mind, the electors were to be chosen in the fall of this year; and then let him listen to the following extracts from the same Van Buren papers, which, if any one shall dare to deny, they shall be produced.

August, 1812. "An administration which enters into war without revenue, without preparation, and without plan; or with preparation worse than none, pursues a miserable course," &c.

October, 1812. "Madison has begot war; war begets debts; debts begets taxes; taxes begets bankruptcy," &c.

"Clinton will beget peace; peace begets riches and property; property begets harmony," &c.

These extracts fully show the ground upon which Mr. Van Buren opposed the re-election of Mr. Madison, and supported Mr. Clinton; and I want it to be constantly recollected, that in the beginning, no man was more opposed to the war, notwithstanding my friend Mr. Benton made such a monstrous fuss in his letter to the convention, in

the state of Mississippi, that nominated him for vice-president, about Van Buren's support of the war, saying it was a long time before the good people of Washington city found out which was the greatest exploit, Van Buren's war speech or General Jackson's victory at Orleans. We shall see by-and-by how this little gentleman, according to his custom, twisted round to the war point, and how (as Mr. Benton wishes to know) he got the name of "*magician.*" If I understand what a magician is, it is one who does things in a secret manner, as if done by spirits, and so cunningly that human observation can't detect the conjuration. Now, no wonder Mr. Benton and Tom Ritchie asks to show what he has done that entitles him to the name of the "little magician;" they believing that he has done his tricks like a show-master, so well that they cannot be discovered. But I will show, before I am done, how he has performed his "*presto—change and begone;*" and request the reader to keep a look-out from this time forward, for he doubtless begins to see already all the parade, the shuffle, trick, and turn-over of a juggler.

As dates are very important to the right understanding of the crooked meanderings of our little politician, I must beg leave to repeat one or two

facts already mentioned. It was on the 22d of May, 1812, Mr. Madison was nominated by the democratic party, in a congressional caucus—the best kind of convention, if conventions could be tolerated at all; for, being the immediate representatives of the people for other objects as dear to them as that of appointing a president, and answerable, at the risk of their office, for their conduct, they would more truly represent, not only the people, but the party to which they belonged. As soon as this fact reached Albany, Van Buren had a call of the Regency, and a caucus was held, as before stated, on the 29th of May, only seven days after Mr. Madison's nomination; and Mr. Clinton was then and there nominated—Mr. Van Buren being then a member of the state senate, and elected in the month of April just preceding.

On the 3d of November following, an extra session of the legislature was called at Albany, for the purpose of choosing presidential electors. At the same time Governor Tompkins announced in his opening message, that war had been declared against Great Britain in the preceding June. This message was calculated, of course, to call forth all the fight, if there was any, in the people, and the strongest feelings of regard for the spot where they and their children lived and prospered, and it

might have been supposed would have called forth loudly from the legislature a warm and united pledge of support to the general government, during the perils and trials that lay along the path of a raging and still thickening war.

In those days it was the practice of the respective branches of the legislature to refer the governor's message to a committee, to report a suitable answer to his communication. On the part of the senate, Messrs. Wilkins, Van Buren, and one other, were appointed to draft the answer. It contains not one sentence approving of the war, nor of the administration; nor any pledge to sustain the government; nor any language condemning the conduct of that nation which had robbed our commerce, impressed our seamen, made captives of our people on the high seas, and was then waging a merciless warfare upon our defenceless women and children on the frontiers, through their savage allies. Not the slightest mention or reference was made to these topics, in the reply to the governor—a reply well known to have been drafted by Mr. Van Buren himself. It was all *non-committal* on these points. The few remarks that were made on the subject of the war, and the aggravating causes which produced it, are cold and heartless, and evidently show, by such studied

caution and reserve, or rather sulky mode of expression, that it was not acceptable to them; and they could not better have conveyed that idea, if they had come out in a bold, manly, and right-down confession of the fact. The following is the language, and all that was said on that point by Mr. Van Buren and his colleagues:

"The senate fully concur with your excellency in the sentiment, that at a period like the present, when our country is engaged in a war with one of the most powerful nations of Europe, difference of opinion *on abstract points* should not be suffered to impede or prevent our united and vigorous support of the constituted authority of the nation."

The careful reader will surely notice that this took place only four months after the declaration of war, and just before the election for president. Such, as before stated, was the uproar and noise made by the federalists, or peace party, in the great state of New York, leagued as they were with some of the pretended democrats, Van Buren at their head, against the war and against Mr. Madison, for the purpose of electing Mr. Clinton, that it was confidently expected the war would become unpopular, nay, odious to the people, and that Madison would be beaten all hollow, and lose the state of New York out of sight. This accomplished,

Van Buren's fortune would be made right off, under Clinton. In and through Clinton, this little arch politician expected at once to rise into high office. And observe well his sly and cautious manner in steering his course through the all-exciting events, not only of a presidential election, but of a war. As little as he had said on either subject himself, that little was liable to two faces, and had a double tongue; notice the extract above given, about the war. But his principal plan of operating was by his friends and his presses; these gave Mr. Clinton and his friends all the assurance he wanted, that Van was secretly at work for him; and if Clinton had been elected, it would have been under the full belief that Van Buren was his active supporter.

But mark the issue: in the same month of the address above mentioned, the election for president took place: Mr. Madison was elected a second time, to commence on the 4th of March, 1813; the war, notwithstanding the violent opposition it met with in the north, became popular; the republican party, then in power, were determined to support Mr. Madison and his war; the whole face of things were changed; the miserable intrigues of New York—a state famous for them, from that day down—being totally routed, behold, the little

magician tacked about, and very shortly thereafter gave indications of his intention to abandon his co-partnership with the federalists, or peace party, and to join the war or democratic party. Accordingly, in 1814, he was again, by his own procurement, placed on the committee to draft an answer to the governor's message of that year. Now compare his tone and language with that which he used in 1812, and which has already been quoted.

In answer to Governor Tompkins' message of 1814, he says, in reference to Mr. Madison—the very man he had opposed to favour Mr. Clinton, and that, too, on account of the war—"An administration selected for its *wisdom and its virtues*, will, in our opinion, prosecute the war till *our multiplied wrongs* are *avenged*, and our *rights* secured."

Does the reader see nothing of the *magician* here? Had any thing taken place since his other address in 1812, that showed more plainly our "multiplied wrongs," or that our "rights" were more entitled to "security?" What made Mr. Madison's administration less *wise* or *virtuous* in 1812 than it was in 1814? I can tell you: the loss of Mr. Clinton's election, and with it the loss of rising to power through that *hook*. He saw, to use a figure drawn from my own calling, that he

had got upon the *wrong scent*, the *game* had *gone out*, and he determined to *blow off his dogs* and quit the *drive*, at least in that direction.

I repeat, that hereafter it will be proven, beyond all contradiction, that "this administration, selected for its *wisdom* and its *virtues*," succeeded in opposition to Mr. Van Buren's wishes, votes, and exertions. He did all in his power to defeat it. He leagued and voted with the federal party in support of De Witt Clinton, against one of Virginia's favourite sons, James Madison, and endeavoured to destroy his fair fame and his administration, *wise* and *virtuous* as it was, by labouring to render the war odious to the people—a war that Virginia urged on and supported with all her might and main. And now Tom Ritchie is trying all the powers of his pen and the purse of the government to make the good people of Virginia vote for this same little man, for the very office of which he so artfully attempted to deprive Mr. Madison—the well-known choice of the republican party—and impudently asks, what has Mr. Van Buren done to deserve the name of the "little magician?"

But this is not all. After the peace, in 1816, he was for the third and last time put upon a committee to draft a reply to the governor's message: and

now mark again his language. He says, "The war in which the nation has been involved, was not only *righteous in its origin*, but successful in its prosecution." Will the reader, among the reflections that must naturally come into his mind upon reading this little politician's *pros* and *cons*, (and I am told by a friend that these words mean *for* and *against*,) merely ask himself why Mr. Van Buren's first address, in 1812, just before he abandoned the federal party, could not have said that "the war was righteous in its origin?" Was not that the trying time to cheer the people on to fight for their *rights*, and to "*avenge*" the *multiplied wrongs* of a desperate foe? Why wait till the war was over to say it was *righteous?* Did he not know what a powerful opposition was made to the war, and Mr. Madison, on account of it? Why did he not, upon the first fair opportunity of lending his influence and his aid to put down such a reckless opposition, and to encourage the people to go in for their country and its rights, come out boldly in the beginning of the war, unite the distracted and disaffected portions of the Union, by making the great state of New York speak as it ought, and thereby bring about a speedy termination of that war? No, all that could then be said was a milk-and-water, half-and-half sort of a drench, leaving

it doubtful whether the water was first poured to the milk or the milk to the water, and purposely designing it to be immaterial which. No, no, this open, honest, and patriotic language did not sort with the views of the party to which he then belonged, much less with his own schemes. Their object was to bring their doctrines into play, and to recover the possession of the government, so unfortunately (for them) lost by the elder Adams. His object was to defeat Mr. Madison, and to come directly into power with De Witt Clinton, who did not originally belong to the federal party. These folks were using one another, not for a common purpose, but for totally different objects. If Clinton and Van Buren had succeeded, the federal party would have been none the better for it; for as soon as these persons had discovered that the war was popular in the South and West, and especially in their own state, they would have gone in for it, as Van Buren did afterwards, and consequently would have left the federalists in the lurch. As soon, however, as Van Buren became recreant and false to his federal associates, he began to prate about our "multiplied wrongs," and a war that was even "*righteous* in its *origin*."

But there is another view of Van Buren's support of Clinton that marks, in the most wonderful

manner, his deep and far-reaching cunning. In most of his plots he has a double purpose, or, as my friend Benton would say, "*two hooks;*" and in this case there is a remarkable instance. We have already shown one; if Clinton succeeded, he expected, in all human calculation, to go with him into some high office in the federal government; but if he failed, which many supposed he greatly preferred, it would destroy his popularity in New York with the democratic party, break him down totally, remove him out of Van Buren's way, and then he, Van, would fling himself at the head of the party, and become master of New York for all future purposes. And it is amazing to see how the plan succeeded! From that hour the state of New York may be said to have passed into the hands of Van Buren. For although Clinton retained, by an unforeseen event at the time, (the success and his persecution on account of his canal policy,) the popularity so eminently endangered, and certainly impaired by his opposition to the war and Mr. Madison, yet he, nor any one else, was ever after able to counteract the start which the well-timed summerset of Van Buren gave him on that unfortunate occasion. It was the lucky path, from which he never could be diverted, that has conducted him to his present proud but undeserved fortunes.

We will return now to the proof of our hero's opposition to Mr. Madison, and of course, to the war; for, as we shall see, he acted with the federal or British party, and they always identified the war with their opposition to the former.

On the 3d of November, 1812, as before stated, the legislature of New York met at Albany to appoint electors for president and vice-president. In the evening of the 4th, a caucus of the members was held in the senate-chamber, to nominate candidates for electors. The great question to be debated was, "Shall the electors be men who will support the re-election of Mr. Madison, the true democratic candidate; or shall they be men who will support the candidate of the federal or British party?" Great violence prevailed in the meeting. The war, thus far, had been unfortunate, especially on the New York frontier. The federal party in that state, aided by the New England junto, and the Clinton and Van Buren faction, were powerful. They had used the requisite means with great liberality, and their workings had told well upon the ignorant multitude of New York, who never had any opinion on any subject, except what comes from the Regency at Albany. The political waters being in great commotion, the froth naturally come to the top, and this gave Van Buren a chance to

float upon the surface, in the midst of the scum. Nay, he contrived to lift his head even above the thickest of the drift, and became a leader in the federal ranks. Delighted with his accidental elevation, his efforts against the democracy of the state, and the country at large, was keen and perpetual.

Red-hot with a fiery zeal in the glorious cause of peace and federalism, he delivered a prepared and studied speech against *southern* politicians and southern interests. Of Virginia, the birth-place of Mr. Madison, and now the hot-bed of Van Burenism, he spoke in terms of mingled ridicule and contempt, and scorched her with the most sneering sarcasms; so that he has made the old dominion, the land of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Marshall, and a host of the biggest men that the New World has ever produced, fulfil the old Spanish proverb, that the more you kick a spaniel, the lower he crouches. Oh, Virginia, Virginia! well may the South mourn over your fallen greatness!

He drew a comparison between the war candidate and the peace candidate, and placed Mr. Madison only among the second-rate statesmen. He denounced, in strong terms, the policy of the general government, in plunging the nation into war. He

declared the president and his cabinet unworthy the confidence of the people. These facts dare not be denied; and I pledge myself, if they are, to produce living witnesses of the most conclusive credibility to sustain every word of them. I invite contradiction; and if it is not made, I claim for the statement the most implicit belief; and though it may not affect such states as New Hampshire and Maine, yet it shall remain an everlasting reproach to Virginia, unless she renounces Van Burenism.

Mr. Van Buren was replied to by General E. Root, Nathan Sanford, and others. They defended the southern statesmen and the war; but the caucus, like the Baltimore convention, having been drilled and stocked for the occasion, they came to a resolution that no man should be nominated as an elector, who was not pledged to vote for the federal candidate for president; whereupon General Root, and other friends of Mr. Madison and the war, retired from the body.

On the 9th of November the electors were chosen by the legislature, each member voting *viva voce*. At the head of the Madisonian ticket was Colonel *Henry Rutgers*, of New York. Mr. Van Buren voted against *Rutgers* and his colleagues. He voted the entire Clintonian ticket,

and it prevailed, to the unspeakable joy of British influence and blue-light federalism.

The *speech* of Mr. Van Buren, in November, 1812, in caucus, upon the nomination, and his vote in senate, on the choice of presidential electors, places beyond all doubt his hostility to the war and its friends. It so marks his political character at that time, that there is no getting away from it. It will haunt him like a ghost. War had raged from the preceding June: two violent parties, *and but two*, existed in the country—the *war* and *peace* party, or, as previously called, the *republican* and *federal* party. Mr. Van Buren leagued, and acted, and voted with the latter, in opposition to Mr. Madison; and this, too, at a moment when the country was bleeding at every pore, and the most disastrous events seemed, like a thunder-cloud, to thicken and darken upon her. His vote stands recorded on the journals of the senate of New York; and if there is any man who doubts it, let him signify his doubts in any manner he may think proper, and if he be not as *servile* as the Albany Argus, as *senseless* as the Baltimore Republican, as *scurrilous* as the Globe, and as *shameless* as the Richmond Enquirer, he shall never doubt again on this subject.

After the federal party were beaten down and

became wind-broken by the success of Mr. Madison; after the game-cock spirit of the nation was raised, their neck-feathers up for battle, and things began to look like death and thunder; after it was clearly perceived that the war party had conquered in the presidential combat, and were marching with the same glorious resolution to equal victory in the war, Mr. Van Buren suddenly turned pale, and placing more confidence in his heels than his head, he made one of his "*presto, change*" kind of summersets, at which he is as nimble as a cat, and all-at-once he was missing from the federal, but instantly found—his head up, eyes to the right, and face to the front—in the republican ranks; and there he stood, as bold and erect as if he had been mustered in from the beginning of the parade. Then, too, but not till then, he shouted, with the new-born zeal of a turncoat, about "*our multiplied wrongs*," the "*righteousness of the war*," and the "*wisdom and virtue*" of Mr. Madison's administration; which administration he had done every thing in his power to blacken and defame, probably on account of its "*virtue*," if not of its "*wisdom*." Does the candid reader longer doubt Mr. Van Buren's *magical* powers?

Having united with M. Clinton in opposition to Mr. Madison and the war, in 1812; and in

1813–14, having joined the war party, he continued with them until about the year 1817, when, for selfish but temporary purposes, he returned to the support of Mr. Clinton again.

Being accommodated entirely at his ease in his new situation, it became necessary to make his peace at Washington, believing that if he could succeed in that, it would increase his influence at home. As he lay watching the current of passing events, an opportunity, as he thought, calculated to answer his purpose, presented itself. In September, 1814, the legislature of New York was convened, and Governor Tompkins, in his opening message, recommended the organization of an efficient military force of something like twenty thousand men, to be employed in lieu of the *drafted militia.* The subject was referred to a committee, consisting of General Root, Mr. Van Buren, and Colonel Stranahan. On the 5th of October following, General Root reported that the committee could not agree, but that a majority of them authorized him to report a bill, reserving to the minority the right to offer a substitute. The next day Mr. Van Buren presented the substitute, and both bills were referred to the same committee of the whole.

Mr. Van Buren has been called a state-rights man; and this is his chief merit in Virginia. Now

I have introduced this last subject to show how far he deserves such a character; and I particularly call the attention of his Virginia friends to this precious part of his political life, as showing his devotion to *state rights*. It will be recollected, that at this time Daniel D. Tompkins was governor of the state of New York; and a truer patriot never lived anywhere than was this same Daniel D. Tompkins; he pledged his own property, and advanced the money to the state to carry on the war. Whatever may have been his weaknesses or his infirmities, he was a warmhearted friend and champion of the war from its beginning to the end. For this, no doubt, Mr. Van Buren detested him, and, what is worse, longed for revenge; permitting his vindictive feelings, in a smothered form, to rankle in his breast until an opportunity should present itself for their full and free gratification. At length, such an opportunity offered as induced Van Buren to suppose he could wound the feelings of Governor Tompkins, and destroy the confidence between him and some of his most cherished friends, and by possibility, create an impression at Washington, that he, Van Buren, was so devoted to the general administration that he would willingly wrest from the governor any power or influence he might possess in his own state, and

prostrate it at the feet of the president of the United States, as a peace-offering for his own infidelity. This movement, be it spoken to the credit of James Madison, produced no effect upon him, however evident it was so intended.

The substitute proposed by Mr. Van Buren contained the following clause: "That the troops to be raised by virtue of this act *shall be subject to the orders of the commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States.*"

General Root reported to strike out this clause, and insert the following: "That the troops to be raised by virtue of this act shall be under the command of, and subject to the orders of the commander-in-chief of *the state*, but *may be employed* in any place and in any service in defence of the liberties and independence of this state, and of the United States, *which the commander-in-chief of the state may direct.*"

This amendment Mr. Van Buren opposed with all his might, and it was finally rejected. By this law, the command of the state troops was to be taken from the governor of the state, (a well-known patriot,) and to be placed under the control of the United States and its officers, *although only substitutes for the state's militia*, contrary to the spirit of the constitution, which gives to the states

the right to officer and train their own militia, and to defend themselves in case of such imminent danger as will not admit of delay.

Mr. Van Buren has been considered by some, particularly Tom Ritchie, who holds himself to be the standard of the doctrine, to be a state-rights man. How far he is entitled to that character by any of his early opinions, let his doings with the federal party during the war, and his support of such a principle as that contained in the bill above mentioned, viz. the raising a corps of militia by a state, to be placed under the control of the *president*, liable to be withdrawn from the defence of the state, and to be used and treated with all the rigour of regular troops, be duly considered before he is taken into full communion, and elected as their president, by that highminded class of southern politicians.

I have now given the history of our hero's political life, as connected with two great events, just after he commenced his career as a public man, to wit, the election of a president and the war with Great Britain, in which, it must be very plain to the reader, he pursued a very wriggling course, first on one side, and then the other; and, indeed, I know of nothing that fits his case so well as a part of my friend Rice's song:

First upon his heel-tap, then upon his toe,
And every time he wheel'd about he jumpt *Jim Crow.*

I shall next proceed to show other cases where his *magical* powers still kept gradually unfolding themselves, putting forth their feelers for some high distinction in the opening scenes of the great political stage upon which he had entered; and in which, so far as shifting his dress was concerned, to perform different characters in the same play, he had more than answered public expectation.

In 1811 a board of canal commissioners was elected in the state of New York. In 1813, the year after Mr. Van Buren came into the legislature, a project was commenced to destroy the plan of internal improvement, then in contemplation. Mr. Van Buren was one of the conspirators, notwithstanding he pretends to deny the right of the federal government to interfere with internal improvements, and has since professed to be a great advocate for those objects by the respective states. For the purpose above mentioned, a resolution was introduced into the senate, calling on the commissioners to report. But the continuance of the war prevented any progress in the scheme until 1817.

In March, 1816, the board of commissioners, with De Witt Clinton at their head, made a grand report; it was all over the brightest light that

human sense could shine upon the subject. Such was the effect of this report, that the house of representatives appropriated, by a vote of eighty-four to eighteen, the sum of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars to commence the work. Mr. Van Buren was well known, and indeed, distinguished, as the enemy of the canal policy; and there are hundreds of living witnesses who can, at this day, establish the fact, if any one has the hardihood to deny it. He was opposed to it for two reasons: the first was, lack of capacity and enterprise for understanding and carrying on such undertakings; and as to the future benefit to his state, that was no object with him, if it in the least degree interfered with any of his schemes for personal advancement. He is a statesman of no enlarged views, extending to those great objects calculated to increase the wealth and resources of a country, and to improve the condition of its people. He comprehends no great work that is to run its roots through all the various interests of society, and designed to send forth its flourishing branches over every pursuit and occupation employed either in the support or refinement of life; and, great as he is considered, I should like any one to point to the *work* of the kind coming from his mind. No, his mind beats round, like a tame bear tied to a

stake, in a little circle, hardly bigger than the circumference of the head in which it is placed, seeking no other object but to convert the government into an instrument to *serve himself* and his *office*-loving friends; and to this end, his views reach no higher than to organize central and auxiliary caucuses, to unite with them the official and monied influence of the country, to hold out "the spoils of victory" as a temptation to membership, to perfect a party drill; and all for the single purpose of securing political power, the great screw by which every thing is regulated thereafter.

Second, Because he abhorred and feared De Witt Clinton, who was the great master-spirit of the canal policy. Having failed to unite his fortunes with this great man in the presidential election—a project where more than one could be benefited by its successful issue—and knowing that the canal business was only large enough for one great mind to direct and conduct to its promised advantages, he was determined to defeat it, if he could, and thereby throw, as he supposed, the higher intellect and more efficient energies of Clinton behind him, in the race for power and fame. All his conversations were against the policy, and for the time he openly and secretly exerted himself to put it down; but when he perceived it was daily

gaining strength, so that its friends had evidently obtained over its enemies, in both branches of the legislature, four votes to one, he determined, rather than be found in such a thin-ribbed minority, and great as might be his inconsistency, not to vote at all on the question; and so he told his friends. This was as far as his modesty would let him go at first. But after looking at the matter again, and seeing that the policy was so great a favourite with the people, and was coming down in such a flood as was likely to sweep into a cocked-hat all the little opposing politicians, so complete was his jump to get out of the way of this rushing torrent, that the first place he found himself was right in the front of the warmest friends of the system. To the utter astonishment of his late co-conspirators against the work, he not only voted for, but made two or three short speeches in favour of the appropriation! The senate consisted of thirty-two members; and the opposition, on the different clauses of the bill, varied from four to seven. In point of fact, there were *eight* opponents to the measure before Van Buren betrayed and deserted them.

But to show how barefaced he was in these sudden summersets, even his friends and presses, that went all lengths for him, couldn't keep up with

nim, or, at least, had shame enough left not to break right off from what they had been advocating at his special instance; and therefore, notwithstanding his vote and his speeches, as above related, that *all sorts of a tool of his*, the Albany Argus, and other papers in his service, and with which he was well known to be intimately connected, continued to pour forth their abuse of the canal policy, and against those men who favoured it. This game his parasites soon came to understand perfectly; and knowing it was the little magician's practice to look one way and row another, or, like all other slight-of-hand men, make the spectators look any other way but upon the trick to be performed, they were not long deceived, and soon learned to *tack* nearly as soon as the showman himself.

But even after this, it can be well established, that he exerted a secret and underhand opposition to the system, until the certainty of success drove all its opponents from the field, covering them with shame and confusion. When this period arrived, Van Buren became a fiery supporter of the system, and was willing to vote larger appropriations in favour of it, than even its first and fast friends required. On this, and, as I will show hereafter on all other questions of any great interest,

such as are calculated to draw up and bring out distinguished statesmen, Van Buren is found first on one side and then on the other; and not content, as most people would be, with showing their dexterity once, he has crossed over like the mazes of a *country dance*, not merely once, but twice or thrice in the same *figure*.

It will be seen by our narrative, that we have brought our hero down to the most unfriendly relations with his rival, De Witt Clinton; and one would suppose he could hardly ever be brought to support him again; but we are approaching another part of the dance, where he will be seen *crossing over* again. It will be recollected that he supported Clinton against Madison in 1812, for the presidency. In 1813 he deceived and abandoned him, and for three years following became his most deadly foe and bitter opponent. I am aware I use strong language, but I assure the reader, not stronger than is necessary to convey the true character of the animosity that Mr. Van Buren bore towards this great man; and I appeal to the citizens of New York, who are well acquainted with the exciting events of the times I speak of, whether I give too much colouring to the statement when I use the words "deadly foe" and "bitter opponent." I am willing to risk the

whole credibility of the interesting and important facts I am unfolding in relation to the life of one of the most serpentine politicians that this or any other country has ever produced, upon the fidelity of the account I have just given of Mr. Van Buren's hatred of De Witt Clinton. Now let us see how easily this long-settled malice is made to give way for a timeserving political purpose.

In April, 1816, Mr. Tompkins was re-elected governor of the state of New York—a renewed confidence well deserved and gratefully bestowed. In December following he was elected vice-president, but did not resign as governor until the 24th of February, 1817. In consequence of this vacancy another governor was of course to be chosen; and late in March, 1817, a legislative caucus was held in Albany, at which De Witt Clinton was nominated for that office. Some weeks previous to the meeting of the caucus, it was ascertained beyond all doubt, that Mr. Clinton would be nominated. In the early part of March several short paragraphs were published in newspapers well known to be under the control of Mr. Van Buren, recommending *harmony*, *forbearance*, &c. The Albany Argus was then, as it is now, in the hands of Van Buren. There is every reason to believe, and so it was given out, without contradiction, that

he was one of its principal proprietors. The reason for this belief is confirmed by the fact that extracts from his private letters have been published, in which he speaks of the alarms of Mr. *Buel*, its nominal editor and proprietor, lest he, Van Buren, "intended to get rid of him." The right of Mr. Van Buren to speak thus of his control over the establishment, has never been denied by Mr. Buel; and the presumption is, therefore, that he was, in whole or in part, owner of the press.

In the second week of March, 1817, a short paragraph appeared in the Argus, recommending "toleration and liberality," and especially among those who "*may receive and reciprocate favours.*" This pointed so clearly to a bargain and sale with the Clintonians, that the democratic party became alarmed lest some new conspiracy was on foot. They held several small private caucuses, Mr. Van Buren generally attending; and at the last, held just the week before the general caucus, he was positively present. It was then determined, Mr. Van Buren not only assenting, but advocating the arrangement, that as soon as Mr. Clinton was nomi nated, the minority should rise and retire from the body. When the general caucus convened, about the 27th of March, Mr. Clinton, as expected, re-

ceived a majority of the votes. Immediately after counting the ballots, Mr. Van Buren rose, and to the utter amazement and confusion of his late friends and co-workers, *moved* that the nomination be *unanimous*. The minority were thunderstruck, and tetotally dumfounded. They nevertheless retired, as had been agreed upon, leaving Van at his *magical* operations with the majority; but not knowing the extent of the treachery, they were knocked into all sorts of disorders, the least of which was the lock-jaw and the blind-staggers. No movement was made. Suspicion and distrust pervaded their ranks, until the *magic* which so benumbed their senses had worked its effect, and then they settled down in calm observation of the scene then passing before their eyes, produced by one of the most dexterous delusions ever played off upon a simple, dough-headed people. After the election of Mr. Clinton, Mr. Van Buren is found in the first platoon of his ranks, marching and countermarching to the orders of his first-lieutenants: and now, so wholly had all his opposition to the canal policy ceased, that in a short time thereafter he began to claim to be one of its foremost champions.

Thus, to repeat, from 1812 to 1813, we find Mr. Van Buren advocating Mr. Clinton; then opposing

him until 1817; and now in this year he is found supporting him again. How long does he remain in this new position? We shall presently see.

Mr. Clinton was elected to the office of governor of the state of New York in April, 1817; and although he knew his nomination and election had been advocated by Van Buren, yet he refused most obstinately to receive him into his confidence; having been bit by him once, he was resolved to have nothing to do with him thereafter. If Van Buren, to serve some of his own hidden purposes, chose to turn backwards and forwards, or from side to side, like a sifter in a baker's hands, the result of which benefited him, Clinton, he well knew that such was only a secondary consideration with the *little magician*, and therefore he kept him at a safe distance. The pliant friends of Clinton recommended harmony and conciliation; while his more sturdy, if not more sagacious, advisers recommended him to stick to his first determination, which was, to meet Van Buren courteously, but *very cautiously;* and to this advice he stuck firmly to the day of his death.

Mr. Van Buren felt the mortifying stand in which he was now placed. He had contributed to the elevation of Governor Clinton, but could receive no countenance or support from him. To

his great chagrin, he found that the "toleration and liberality" recommended by his press, the Argus, had not produced the effect intended; and that so far from Mr. Clinton's "reciprocating the favours he had received," he was hardly willing to extend a cold civility.

This state of things, although greatly chafing to his pride, would have been very readily borne by a man who measured none of the good things of this world by his sensibility, but estimated them only as they would serve the passion for high office. In this last he considered all other blessings to centre. He would therefore have continued to fry under the disgrace of serving Clinton, with a full knowledge of his confidence withdrawn, and the still more degrading fact that his political honesty was suspected and nailed to the counter, if there had been any chance to realize the object he had in view by his treachery to his friends. But he considered it useless to hang on to a side that promised nothing, and was murdering his feelings by the hour; he therefore, during the summer of 1817, commenced privately making the necessary arrangements for a return to the party he had so wantonly deceived in the caucus of the preceding March.

At the session of the legislature in 1818, Mr.

Van Buren did all within his power to cripple and vex his administration. He was compelled by previous committals, although he knew it was the favourite child of Clinton, to sustain the canal system; for he had run through all the *changes* upon the subject which he was entitled to, and which, in all conscience, the most double-dealing politician could require. He, however, so managed his cards, and so blinded his *quondam* friends, as to worm himself again into the democratic party; and before the session closed, he was the open and avowed opponent of Clinton.

We now turn from the history of our hero's life, as connected with his friendships and animosities, his professions and betrayals, so shamefully played off upon that great statesman, De Witt Clinton: they would seem to be of the most exaggerated character. I again appeal to those living witnesses—and there are hundreds of them now in the state of New York—to say whether they are not as faithfully related as the nature of the facts and the limits of this work would admit; whether there is any one statement that speaks more than the truth, or less than justice. Before, however, leaving this branch of the subject, to enter upon one connected with the public life of another equally great man, in which, if possible,

more intrigue and management will be seen, it will be well to present a reflection or two, which will fully satisfy the boasted inquiry of Mr. Benton and Ritchie, as to "what has Van Buren done to give him the name of magician?" It will be recollected that from the period down to which we have brought our narrative, Van Buren continued the mortal enemy of Mr. Clinton to the day of his death; that in the interval he had carried his revenge so far as to succeed in getting Mr. Clinton removed from the petty office of canal commissioner; but in this, and perhaps the first instance of his life, he overreached himself; for his malice was so greedy that its cormorant appetite provoked the sympathies of the people, and perhaps one of the most powerful reactions took place in favour of Clinton that ever occurred in the great field of politics. The whole state rose as one man; public feeling swelled into a torrent, upon the top of which it bore Clinton into the highest office the people could confer. He became a political idol. He was carried upon, and directed, a current that swept every thing before it. Van Buren and his friends stood aghast and confounded, and to all human appearance seemed lost beyond redemption: but mark the issue. Clinton died suddenly, before any steps were taken to break the charm

of his great popularity, amidst all the circumstances which ungrateful treatment and a deep sympathy for his untimely end could inspire; and yet, Mr. Van Buren was able not only to evade the force of these almost resistless circumstances, but actually to turn them to his own account. He had been fortunately thrown into the senate of the United States, before this crisis, so fortunate to Clinton, had arrived, which threatened the utter downfall of Van Buren, and would probably have accomplished it but for his death. Upon the arrival of the news of Clinton's death at Washington, Van Buren seized the occasion of becoming Clinton's eulogist. It was too good an opportunity to recover his foothold, lost by too much eagerness, and which he readily foresaw could be effected by the very same process that conducted Clinton to his unparalleled success: I mean the sympathies of the people. This is the first great principle by which they are governed; and to give it a fortunate turn in favour of any project, is to secure, nine times out of ten, the full success of the undertaking. I refer the reader to his own experience in all matters, whether public or private.

To present to the people of New York the spectacle of any man's rising to announce the death, and eulogize the life of a favourite son and idolized

statesman, would be sensibly felt by them: but when that man was a distinguished senator of their own; when that senator was the deadly foe of their deceased son; and when that foe, in a spirit of deep humility, and before the assembled talents and greatness of the nation, professed to have consigned to the same grave with his rival all his feelings of animosity, and painted his character in the most pathetic and engaging colours, for which he had artfully prepared himself, it is impossible to calculate the result of such seeming magnanimity and disinterestedness. It turned out to be the forerunner of success; and it is most wonderful to contemplate the consequences. The very tide upon which Clinton had been elevated, in opposition to every effort, secret and open, of Van Buren,—which had led to such unbounded fame and popularity as to Clinton, and such shame and consternation as to Van Buren,—that very tide was immediately mounted by the latter, notwithstanding all the opposing considerations just mentioned, and he has triumphantly drifted to the highest honours of his state, as if he had been the original and exclusive object of the people's affections. If this has not been the work of magic, will any of Mr. Van Buren's friends just point out how such a political wonder has taken place? Let every plain,

open, and sincere man—a man who values fair dealing, straight-forward conduct, upright actions, directness of purpose, nothing round about, but right to the point—duly reflect upon this part of Van Buren's history, and if he does not see the justness of the charges against him for intrigue and management, then I confess we have indeed fallen upon evil times.

I proceed now to lay another and yet stronger case of Mr. Van Buren's *magical* powers before my readers; and I ask their particular attention to the details, pledging my reputation as a public character, or, if it be preferred, as a true and skilful bear-hunter, to the truth of every particular, still calling upon those who were concerned in the events related, to support my facts, if any one dares to deny them.

On the 4th of March, 1819, the term of service of *Rufus King*, as a senator of the United States, was to expire. He was, as everybody knows, a kind of run-mad opponent of the admission of Missouri into the Union, except upon conditions which the southern people believed was the entering wedge to the destruction of a certain kind of property held by them. On the question of slavery he was a fanatic. All his prejudices were enlisted against the South and southern policy, both on

account of their slavery and their attachment to republican principles. He was a federalist dyed in the wool, and a leader of the clan. He rallied around him all the New England federalists, and entertained the very strongest prejudices against Mr. Jefferson and the leading Virginia politicians and their doctrines, denouncing them as wild and disorganizing. He was violently opposed to the war; and for the purpose of mortifying Mr. Madison and disgracing his administration, he advocated in the United States a project for mortgaging the national domain to raise money to carry on the war, contending that the people had not confidence enough in the government, or the administration, to lend them money without a mortgage upon their public lands. I consider these remarks, and so the reader will find, indispensably necessary to what immediately follows, and by no means to reproach the character of that illustrious individual, whose opinions, doubtless, were honest, though they wholly differed from those of the republican party.

When the legislature of New York convened, at the close of 1818 or beginning of 1819, Mr King was to be re-elected, or a new senator chosen. This, it was foreseen, (or rather supposed,) would be embarrassing to Mr. Van Buren, because, as has been shown, Mr. King and Van Buren had

acted together against Mr. Madison and the war. It was also well known that they thought, or pretended to think alike on the Missouri question.

Mr. Clinton had many personal as well as political friends arising out of the canal policy. He was therefore sustained by a majority of the democratic party in the legislature. If the party acted in concert, it was very certain that Mr. King would be defeated. If either section of the party supported *him*, he would be re-elected. If neither voted for him, but divided on another, there could be no election during the session.

Under such circumstances, Mr. Van Buren's plan was to prevent any election; and to this end, he refused to be governed by the proceedings of the democratic caucus, (though now he is in favour of one at Baltimore,) nominating a senator, because they were favourable to John C. Spencer, known as a friend and connexion of Mr. Clinton.

Van Buren now went to work at his accustomed game, "*divide and conquer;*" a game he does not like at all when played against himself. Every movement that he could make to distract the party, was made, and in many instances with great success.

The legislature, as already remarked, met in

January, 1819. The federal party mustered about one to four of the democratic party united. In the choice of a speaker of the House, General *German*, a democratic member, but a friend of Governor Clinton, was elected. He received the votes of the federal members. This afforded Van Buren exactly what he wanted, a glorious opportunity to denounce De Witt Clinton and his friends, and to charge them with having leagued with the federalists for the purpose of RE-ELECTING RUFUS KING to the senate of the United States. Mr. King was known to be the most violent opponent of the South, and against the Missouri question; he was charged with uttering the most incendiary opinions. The Albany Argus and other papers belonging to the Van Buren faction, published almost daily the same sentiments; and as a specimen of Van Buren's *apparent* hostility to Mr. King, the following short extracts are made from one of his most servile presses:

"January 16th, 1819. If a *federal* gentleman is appointed to the senate, let other states in the Union be satisfied that the administration of this state is under *federal influence*. If Mr. Clinton is the republican we are taught to believe, then no *federalist* will be appointed."

"February 1st. No hope of success or triumph should lead to any *alliance with political opponents.*"

It is useless to multiply extracts of the above description. These are given for the purpose of showing the intrigue of Van Buren. In the commencement of 1819, all his efforts were directed to two points: First, to defeat, for the present, the re-election of Mr. King; and, second, so to distract and divide the democratic party, (a matter that gives him and the "Gin'ral" great apprehensions at the present time,) as to prevent the choice of a senator during the then session of the legislature. The object he had in view was to enter into a bargain with the friends of Mr. King. If this arrangement could be made, Van Buren was prepared to advocate his re-election at the next session of the legislature. But at the (then) present moment, he could gain nothing by supporting Mr. King, and therefore, according to the New York tactics, he went for putting off the case, and taking the *rise* in the *market,* usually produced by doubts and delays.

CHAPTER II.

On the 2d of February, 1819, as appears by the journals of the legislature of New York, an unsuccessful attempt was made to appoint a senator. A majority of the whole number of votes was necessary to a choice. In the two Houses, the votes were, for

John C. Spencer, (Clintonian,) - -	61
Samuel Young, (Anti-Clintonian,) -	56
Rufus King, (Federal,) - - - -	38

No other attempt to appoint a senator was made during the session, and the legislature adjourned without a choice.

As soon as the question was decided that Mr. King would not receive the support of the Clintonians, Mr. Van Buren opened a negotiation with the federal party, for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements to secure his election at the next session. The terms and conditions have always been considered, in the north at least, as discreditable to Mr. King as they were to Mr. Van Buren. It would seem, if this was not the case,

the relatives of Mr. King would, probably, long since have rescued their father's fame from the effects of the well-known rumours which have been so frequently circulated on the subject. No one doubts that the means of placing this bargain in its true colours is in the possession of his family; and until they are brought forth, common justice requires that Mr. King and Van Buren must be linked together as equals in this transaction.

The question of appointing a senator was put to rest, as before mentioned, on the 2d of February. Early in March, Mr. William Coleman, editor of the New York Evening Post, for the purpose of encouraging and flattering Van Buren, complimented Mr. King in the strongest terms, for the manly resistance he had made and was making in the senate of the United States, against the SOUTH, on the *Missouri* question.

And here it may not be amiss to stop for a moment, merely to make the inquiry, what it is that has made the state of Missouri so vastly friendly to Van Buren? Under the influence, if not the control, of Colonel Benton, she has nominated him for the presidency. Can any good reason be given for this? Do the good people of that state know Mr. Van Buren? Are they informed of the fact, that the most implacable and uncompromising

enemy with which they had to contend in the senate of the United States, during the two sessions of 1819 and 1820, was Rufus King? Do they, or do they not know that Mr. Van Buren was the principal cause of Mr. King's election? Are they not apprized that this, their untiring foe, was thus elected by a selfish and detestable intrigue, of which Martin Van Buren was not only the prime mover, but the master-spirit that directed it to its final issue? And is it for this hostility to their admission into the Union they are now called upon to vote for him as president? Is it not more charitable to believe that the good people of Missouri have been deceived by political mountebanks, and are entirely ignorant of Mr. Van Buren's opposition to their growth or prosperity?

In the beginning of April, 1819, the legislature of New York adjourned; and at that period there is the most incontestable proof that Mr. Van Buren *professed* the most deadly hostility to any man or measure favourable to the re-election of Rufus King. The party press of the day presented a very singular aspect indeed, not to say a most corrupt condition. That portion of it with which Van Buren was connected, with the *Albany Argus* at the head, was assailing and traducing De Witt Clinton and his adherents for an alleged combina-

tion to *promote* Mr. King's election; while the federal portion, with the *New York Evening Post* in the van, was pouring forth its denunciations against Mr. Clinton and his friends for *their* opposition to the *same* individual. Under such circumstances, the adjournment took place. Thus far the Van Burenites had succeeded; they had prevented the election of a senator; that was all they wanted, for the time; but they had further effected a very important point, in creating strong prejudices among the people against Mr. Clinton, by repeated charges that he was leagued with the federalists to secure Mr. King's election.

As soon as the legislature had adjourned, Mr Van Buren, through the agency of Coleman of the Evening Post, opened his negotiation with Mr. King. A close and confidential intercourse ensued. This was considered the more extraordinary, as Mr. King was well known to possess high-toned aristocratic feelings; and that he would not mix or associate with such men as Mr. Van Buren and me, who were nothing but the sons of little, petty, country tavern-keepers, unless it was his intention to make use of such folks as we were; and for such use he was willing to *pay;* and, unfortunately, in Mr. Van Buren he found a person not less willing to *receive* than he was to

pay. At that time, Mr. Van Buren was just beginning to *creep* into what he now calls "*genteel society.*" He was then contented to eat and to drink and to associate with plain men, with honest hearts and clean hands. If he was travelling, and stopped at a house, he was willing to sit down among the people, and did not feel himself degraded by riding in a comfortable country wagon. Then, anybody could tell by his looks that he was not a *woman;* but the signs of the times are wofully changed.

Now, he travels about the country and through the cities in an English coach; has English servants, dressed in uniform—I think they call it livery; they look as big as most of our members of Congress, and fully as fine as the higher officers in the army: no longer mixes with the sons of little tavern-keepers; forgets all his old companions and friends in the humbler walks of life; hardly knows, I suspect, his old patron, *Rial,* eats in a room by himself; and is so stiff in his gait, and prim in his dress, that he is what the English call a dandy. When he enters the senate-chamber in the morning, he struts and swaggers like a crow in a gutter. He is laced up in corsets, such as women in a town wear, and, if possible, tighter than the best of them. It would be diffi

cult to say, from his personal appearance, whether he was man or woman, but for his large *red* and *gray* whiskers.

During the summer of 1819, Mr. Van Buren was in the habit of coming from Albany to the city of New York, and visiting Mr. King on Long Island. The result of all this billing and cooing was, an arrangement with Van Buren, notwithstanding all his former abuse of Mr. King, that he should be elected senator when the legislature again assembled. A more corrupt and profligate political bargain was never negotiated and consummated in the United States. Mr. King was a violent federalist; had warmly opposed every republican administration, from Mr. Jefferson's, down; threw difficulties in the way of Mr. Madison, in every possible shape, with a view to produce a disgraceful termination of the war, thereby expecting to drive the republicans from power, and restore the federalists to their former standing. He was the most persecuting adversary of the South; had delivered, and it was well known would continue to deliver, speeches in the senate—of what the Richmond Enquirer denominated at the time "*a most incendiary character*"—against the unrestricted admission of Missouri into the Union; and yet Martin Van Buren, professing to belong to the

democratic party—and has been more abused, according to the sayings of Benton and Ritchie, than any other *republican* but Mr. Jefferson—became, first, his secret opponent and reviler, and then, in the same identical summer, his open champion and supporter! Does Benton and Ritchie dare to say such conduct as this deserves no abuse; such flagitious bargaining merits no reproach; and that the man who is censured for such infamous bartering in politics, for the sake alone of office, is considered persecuted? If they admit the facts, there is no abuse too great, and he never can be sufficiently reproached for such shameless prostitution of principle; and if they deny them, they can and shall be proven, to the satisfaction of every man in the nation, who is not a slave to prejudice, or a vile menial of the kitchen cabinet.

Among the first proofs that Van Buren had put his fist, as we say in the back-woods, to the contract with Mr. King, by which he conveyed to him that portion of the democratic party who merely assumed the name, the more readily to be used and transferred by Van Buren, whenever it suited his purpose to make a political bargain, was the course of the Albany Argus. Although names are nothing, yet there is nothing in all nature so well calculated to deceive as names. Under the name of the demo-

cratic party, the people of Maine and New Hampshire are at this day more duped and gulled than any people on the face of the globe, by the tricks and artifices of such men as Isaac Hill and Silas Wright. Under this name Van Buren has practised all his frauds upon the good people of New York, and is now pushing the same deception into every quarter of the Union. Although I have plainly shown, by the most unquestionable evidence, that every important act of his life has been connected with the federal party; that he has served that party infinitely more than the other; that he has been against the republican party in all the great struggles calculated to try its principles down to the very foundation; that he was against the war, than which nothing could so effectually endanger the democratic doctrines; that he went against Mr. Madison, who was the clear choice of the democratic party, and tried, and succeeded in part, to divide it in favour of Mr. Clinton, (though now he thinks it will be very wrong to split the party;) that he supported Mr. King—the king of federalists, and perhaps the most mortal enemy the democratic party had—at a time when the Union was nearly convulsed to its centre, and the republican party needed all the help they could get in both branches of Congress: and yet his friends, with the "Gin'ral"

at their head, are crying out that Martin Van Buren is at the head of the democratic party, and that the democratic party must not divide in his election for the president. Even the republican state of Virginia, with all these damning facts of double-dealing, two-sided, under-handed, cross-jostling, trading, shifting, and gambling acts of his, by which the democratic party has been deceived, betrayed, and deserted a hundred times over, is about to listen to the deceitful insinuations of Tom Ritchie, that he is a shamefully-abused and much-injured republican, who has done more for the democratic party than any other living man, except General Jackson. May God of his infinite mercy save the country from such a destroying infatuation.

As before stated, the course of the Albany Argus gave early signs that all was lost; that the long-hidden and much-discussed compromise was finished. It occasionally gave out dark and mysterious intimations in paragraphs like this: "that Mr. King was not so uncompromising a *federalist* as some had supposed." But at length, towards the close of the summer, the following remarks appeared in that paper, which was deemed at the time conclusive, as to the course and policy Van Buren and his party intended to pursue, when the legislature

should convene, on the senatorial election: "We are happy to observe that Mr. King is decidedly opposed to the measures of Mr. Clinton."

But the finishing blow is yet to be told; and if it does not furnish the most artfully-conceived, thorough-bred, ingrained, deep-dyed political villany that ever demagogue displayed, then I confess my habits of life, and still more limited information, has not only kept me ignorant of political debauchery, but narrowed my conception of corruption within a circle beyond which I hope never to be enlightened, if there is any thing worse than what I am about to relate.

After the bargain and sale was made between Martin Van Buren and Rufus King, a *pamphlet*, in support of Mr. King as senator, appeared, entitled "CONSIDERATIONS on the election of Rufus King," &c.; beyond all question the joint work of Van Buren and Benjamin F. Butler, the present attorney-general. Now, is it possible to conceive of any thing more profligate? During the winter of 1819, Van Buren was continually denouncing as an unprincipled federalist, any man who would, *directly* or *indirectly*, support the election of Rufus King, and did actually, by his intrigues and management, defeat the election of a senator; yet within six months after this open avowal, he enters

into a solemn agreement not only to support and vote for this gentleman, but to write, or procure to be written, a pamphlet recommending his appointment to the senate.

In the autumn of 1819, as the legislature of the state of New York was to meet in the following January, some of Mr. Van Buren's adherents became alarmed: they were fearful of the consequences to the party, if they supported a federalist of Mr. King's stamp; but they were yet more alarmed at the consequences of returning to the senate of the United States a man so vindictive against the South, so unkind and uncharitable in his reflections upon their conduct as to slavery, but especially so violent in his opposition against Missouri, as Mr. King had proven himself to be at the preceding session of congress. On this subject one of his friends wrote to him, and expressed his apprehensions. From one of his letters in answer to these fears, I am authorized to give the following extract, to which I beg the earnest attention—nay, the whole soul, if he has any—of the reader. The *original*, in the handwriting of, and signed by *Martin Van Buren*, is in the possession of a friend of my informant, and if its authenticity is denied, will be produced at the shortest notice. In that letter, among other curious things,

(for it consists of three pages,) are the following remarks: "I should sorely regret to find any *flagging* on the *subject* of Mr. King. *We are committed to his support.* It is both *wise* and *honest*, and *we* must have no *fluttering* in *our course.* Mr. King's views towards *us* are honourable and correct. The Missouri question conceals, *so far* as HE is *concerned*, NO PLOT, and WE shall give it *a true direction. You know* what the feelings and views of our friends were when I saw you; and *you know* what we *then concluded to do.* My 'Considerations,' &c., and the *aspect* of the *Albany Argus*, will show you that *we* have entered *on the work* in *earnest. We cannot, therefore, look back.* Let us not, therefore, have any *halting. I will put my head on its propriety.*"

Now, here is a full disclosure of the treason; here is the very language, style, and countenance of a plot. The short sentences, as if written in a suppressed breathing; the half-way hints; the partly-concealed views; words that point to more than is proper to be mentioned, even to a friend and confederate; reference to former arrangements; allusions to pre-concerted plans; and, indeed, every thing that marks and defines a *traitor.* Will any one pretend to say, after this, that the terms "New York tactics," "Albany Regency," "Manager,"

and "Little Magician," are untruly or even ungenerously applied to Mr. Van Buren? If they do, there never has yet, in all the crime with which the world has been cursed, died upon the gallows any one of its perpetrators, with evidence sufficient to have consigned him to such a fate, and all creation should now be in tears and mourning for the murder so widely and deeply committed upon injured innocence.

It will be perceived in the above extract, that although the terms and conditions of the treacherous compact are not specified, there is an acknowledgment that they (the Albany Regency) "are committed to his [King's] support." The pamphlet in favour of electing Rufus King, entitled "Considerations on the Election of Rufus King," is here acknowledged by Van Buren to have been written by him, when he says "*my Considerations*," &c. Here, also, is a confession—a most precious one, as concerns many of the facts related in this narrative, which the reader is requested to bear in mind—of Mr. Van Buren's control over the Albany Argus.

But there is one other suggestion in the letter, which, if not alarming, is, to say the least of it, very mysterious, and the public ought never to rest satisfied until it is fully explained. It would seem, as if there was a *plot* in the Missouri ques-

tion, very different from any thing Mr. King had in view; and that while he was using it for one purpose, the little magician and his friends had a totally different object in their eye, which, though it has failed and passed away, ought to be known to the country, as a caution how they place its destinies in the hands of so dark and designing a junto as the Albany Regency.

Mr. Van Buren states that "Mr. King's views towards *us* (the Regency) are honourable and correct," and then adds, "the Missouri question conceals, *so far* as HE [Mr. King] is *concerned*, NO PLOT." It must be obvious to every mind, if language means any thing, that this last expression, connected with the one just above it, has reference *alone* to the *motives* of Mr. King, and that the writer's intention was barely to release Mr. King from *any concern* in whatever *plot* might be *concealed* under the *Missouri question.* And this construction is *conclusive*, when the two following sentences are properly considered. After remarking that "the Missouri question conceals *no plot*, *so far* as *he* [Mr. King] is *concerned*, the writer says, "*we* shall give it a *true direction*," and then immediately refers to a secret understanding among the Regency, expressed in these very remarkable but significant words; viz. "*You know* what the

feelings and views of our friends were when I saw you, and *you know* what *we then concluded to do.*" Now, what was that "*true direction?*". The public has a right to know it, for everybody knows the question came very near dissolving the Union; and, but for the *direction* given to it by Mr. Clay, (not Mr. Van Buren,) in all human probability we should now be a dismembered nation, subject to all the strifes and contentions of petty republics, from discord within and distrust without. No other *direction* from Mr. King's original design was attempted to be given to it, except that which it took from Mr. Clay's proposed compromise; and consequently, but for that, the scheme, whatever it was, would have taken effect. Now, I repeat, *that scheme* ought to be known, especially as the projector and principal actor in it is lately selected and nominated by General Jackson to be his successor to the high office of president of the United States. It must have been a matter of the most promising result to his wishes, or men who had been the long and sworn enemies of each other, who belonged to different parties, who had always been rivals and jealous of one another, not only from their difference of politics, but their difference of station and standing, one belonging to the common people and the other to the nobility,

could not have so easily dropped their resentments and become so closely united; much less could Van Buren have said that it was "*wise* to elect Mr. King," and that he would "put his head upon its propriety."

Mr. Van Buren owes it to himself, and much more to his country, to show the motive of this most discordant and unnatural union between himself and Mr. King; it must have had some object, and if it was not a hurtful, and therefore hateful one, it is in his power, and he is bound, to show the true one; and if he fails to do so, the world has a right to infer that it was a corrupt coalition, founded in corrupt motives, and aiming at a corrupt purpose. Let him, therefore, come out, and relieve the state of Missouri from the awkward condition in which Mr. Benton has placed her, by making her nominate her earliest and worst, because secret, enemy, to the presidency of the United States; for if, with the odious disclosures above made, her *people* can be made to vote for him, the office-holders will have given proof, that in one state at least, they are all-powerful, and that her people know nothing of principle when it comes in opposition to party drill.

CHAPTER III.

I HAVE now gone through some of the most prominent events of Mr. Van Buren's early political life, and such as present him in conflict with some of the most distinguished men of his state—men decidedly his superiors in point of character, age, influence, and ability—in which he seems to have used them at pleasure, to accomplish his schemes of aggrandizement; in which he has put them up and put them down, whenever he has thought proper; promoting his and their views to-day, and circumventing them to-morrow, when he did not wish to share with them his good fortunes. One would naturally ask, how has this been done? Has it been by open, honest, and fair means? If so, they could be shown, and ought to be; for every one must admit, that as things now stand, they are mixed up with wonderful doubt, and the appearance, to say the least of it, of amazing dexterity—a dexterity, if not meriting the name of *magic*, is at least entitled to that of *mystery*.

I am about to exhibit him upon another theatre, in which he has been equally successful, and by the operation of causes much more wonderful—causes that have secured for him the second office in the government, and almost secured his successorship to the first. Now, if this unrivalled elevation cannot in justice be ascribed to either his talents or great services, (and who among the most unblinking of his friends can contend for such merit? who can point us to a single consequence of either?) must not some other cause be sought to solve the riddle? And have I not laid before the country the very facts that sufficiently account for all this singular prosperity? Who, that reads what I have written, so long as it remains uncontradicted or unexplained to the people, can doubt for a moment that the rise of a man from nothing, in so populous a state as New York, without education, without uncommon genius or physical exertion, without fortune, without influential friends, without talents but of the most ordinary kind, without any of those great acts of a statesman that usually beget sudden and exalted popularity; opposed, too, by the first men and talents of his state, must be wholly owing to a subtlety of mind and a suppleness of principle totally inconsistent with those moral obligations usually imposed upon human conduct?

Mr. Benton and Tom Ritchie are trying to persuade the people that Mr. Van Buren has been more abused than any man in America, except Mr. Jefferson; and they except Mr. Jefferson merely for the benefit of comparing Van Buren to that great man, thinking the people will take it for granted that as Mr. Jefferson was made president because he was so much abused, Mr. Van Buren ought to be also, for the same reason. But no one can show that Mr. Jefferson was so great a double-dealer as Mr. Van Buren, or the thousandth part of the intrigue and management which I have already exhibited, let lone that which is behind; and until they do, I insist upon it that they take nothing by linking Van Buren's name to that of Jefferson's.

I have clearly shown that Van Buren had a deep agency in the Missouri question; and whatever may have been his real object in his opposition to the admission of that state into the Union, no one can deny but that it fixes upon him his support of *abolition*, notwithstanding Tom Ritchie is defending him against such principles, among the people of the South. And what is his defence? Why, that Van Buren has written a letter to somebody, stating that he was always of the opinion that "Congress had no right to interfere with the ques-

tion of slavery, *without an alteration of the constitution*, not even if the states would consent to it."

Now *Tappan*, *Garrison*, and every other fanatic and abolitionist in the United States, not entirely run mad, will grant *that*, and do grant *it* every day; but they are nevertheless exerting every power of their minds, and every penny of their purse, to bring about emancipation in another way; by inflaming and poisoning public opinion on the subject, and then leave the accomplishment of the work to whatever consequences such distemperature of public sentiment may produce, even if it should be Mr. Van Buren's remedy—an alteration of the constitution. Can Mr. Van Buren say he is not one of these *agitators* for a *political purpose?* If he will not answer the question, let the petitions from twenty thousand memorialists, in the state of New York, at the last session of Congress, answer it for him.

The death of Tompkins, Clinton, and King, and the peculiarly fortunate turn which Van Buren had given to all the great measures originating in the course of their public service, left him the complete master of the great state of New York. With his little platoon officers, such as Cambreling, Hamilton, Benjamin F. Butler, and others of like kidney,

scattered through the state, commanding petty associations, well organized, and all regulated like clockwork, by the great central Regency at Albany, no bashaw with three tails ever had his slaves under more abject and servile control than did our little magician the empire state of New York. Having gained all he could well desire in his own state, he was determined to put himself in the market among the great federal politicians. With them he well knew that such a state as New York was not to be squinted at; and by opening a house of pleasure, if he could not honourably wed her to some of the contending suitors for her favour, he had full proof she could suffer nothing by prostitution; and, foul or fair, her embraces were ready for any courtier.

The two last years of Mr. Monroe's closing term of service found a number of competitors for his high place. The lamented Loundes, of South Carolina, had all along, through this administration, been looked to as a fit successor to Mr. Monroe; but his untimely death made way for another of Carolina's able sons. John C. Calhoun, William H. Crawford, Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, and Andrew Jackson, were severally urged by their friends as the proper persons to succeed to the presidency. Mr. Calhoun's able talents, and the still more able support which he gave to the war, that had termi-

nated so gloriously for America, made him extremely popular everywhere, but more especially with the army and navy. He was well known to be the particular favourite and confidant of the late president Monroe. The great state of Pennsylvania and Connecticut were ready to give him their support; and, indeed, his prospects were as flattering as any of the other expectants. But, being much the youngest man, and willing to secure, by a longer probation of public service, a higher claim to such a distinguished honour, he very magnanimously retired from the contest, and with all his great character, influence, and abilities, went over to the support of Andrew Jackson, contented with the evidence of public esteem and confidence in the lower but second office of the government. How this generous friendship has been rewarded by General Jackson the sequel will show. This act of self-denial and magnanimity, exercised towards General Jackson, which immediately secured to him the great state of Pennsylvania, greatly increased the popularity of Mr. Calhoun, and made him altogether the most prominent individual for the office of chief magistrate, at a future day, of any whose pretensions were then before the public. And this, as will hereafter be shown, was readily and most disquietingly perceived by Martin Van

Buren. Without his destruction, which was marked by him, and resolved on, he foresaw that all his plans were liable to complete frustration.

Among the remaining rivals for the office, Van Buren made an accurate survey. He weighed, as well as he could, the prospects of each; and having no other rule of choice but that of selecting the strongest, (for talents, virtues, or principle made no part of his measure of public functionaries,) his mind inclined to John Quincy Adams.

Jackson's candidacy was so intolerably ridiculed at first, as having, from his deficient education, (a good deal like my own,) as well as from a dissolute course of life, no other possible claims to such a responsible station but one single fortunate battle, he, nor any one else of any tolerable discernment, ever dreamed that the American people, boasting of their free and enlightened institutions, were so lacking in self-respect as to manifest to the civilized world how little right they had to brag of either, by the choice of such a man to such an office. He therefore very promptly determined to have no connexion with him, especially as he was supported by Mr. Calhoun, a southern politician, for the like of whom, at that day, he had no very favourable notions. Against Mr. Crawford, for the same reason, he entertained similar prejudices; but

how they were afterwards changed, we shall see by-and-by. As to Mr. Clay, he had taken up a strong antipathy, upon which he bottomed a secret grudge for having defeated his schemes, whatever they were, in effecting the compromise of the Missouri question. Thus circumstanced, he was driven, not by inclination, but partly by necessity and partly by the belief that Adams was the strongest man, to his support. This determination of his, he was gradually and cautiously leaking out to his cohorts, but taking care to keep himself within the line of a safe retreat, if matters and things should require it. Just as he was about to give the open order for New York to strike for Adams, one of those singular manœuvres for which he himself is signally famed, occasioned him to change the whole front of his column, and it was wheeled and marched in another direction. Mr. Crawford, who had a comprehensive eye, and could read men as well as any other politician, had long seen, from Van Buren's success with the immense population of New York, against talents and influence far superior to his own, that his inordinate ambition could be made extremely useful to him. He, therefore, being at the head of a dominant and powerful party in Georgia, resolved upon a stroke, unseemly and out of joint as it might and did appear, to win to

his support the state of New York. This apparently ridiculous project was none other than the nomination of Van Buren for the vice-presidency, by the state of Georgia. Crawford was as much the dictator of his own state as Van Buren was of New York, and his order was no sooner given than obeyed. Van was nominated by the Crawford party, amidst the downcast looks of every honest man in the country, but under the loud and repeated shouts of laughter from what was called the Clark party. The whole affair assumed the character of *a good joke;* and long and cruelly did the Clark party use it as such against their opponents. The thing appeared so barefaced, so ill-timed, so wanting in respect for public opinion, decidedly made up against such a bargaining and prostituted politician, as well as against his limited capacity and more humble services, that "Vice-president Van Buren" became a term of the most ineffable ridicule: it was bandied at every corner: the Clark men *lathered* the Crawfordites with it at every turn; whether they held their faces *up* or *down* or *sideways, slash* went the *daub,* up to their eyes, into their ears, or down to their throats.

As I have before stated, in the general assembly of the state, where the Crawford party had the ascendency, and of course, elected all the officers

out of their own party, the Clarkites, being in the minority, kept Van Buren as their standing candidate for all the lowest order of appointments, such as door-keeper, dog-whipper, trip-trotter, and the like; and it was amusing to see and hear the tickets exhibited and read out on such occasions. They had Van Buren caricatured on them in every possible form—half man and half cat, half fox and half monkey, half snake and half mink, always designating him by some animal that most resembled his traits of character. The tickets would contain something like this: "Vice-president Van Buren for door-keeper," "Whiskey Van," "Blue whiskey Van," "Little Van," and many others, too tedious to mention.

The gentle reader may think that this is a wanton slander upon Mr. Van Buren, and a very unmerited reproach upon a large and highly respectable party in Georgia, to wit, the Clark party. By-the-by, I do not think them half as much reproached, by telling these facts, as the party that nominated Van Buren. But to put this matter out of all doubt, I will place myself under this obligation to the reader and the general community, that, if the remains of the old Clark party (if it now exists in that form) will not themselves say that every statement I have made of this matter is substantially true, I am will-

ing to stand branded with the name and character of a calumniator, and wholly unworthy of any credit for any thing I have said in the whole life of Van Buren. I hope this will satisfy every caviller.

I have been minute, and perhaps somewhat tediously particular, in this part of my narrative; but I have two objects in it,—First, To show the miserable contempt with which the nomination of Van Buren, even for the office of vice-president, was received everywhere, but especially in Georgia, where a vote for president is confidently calculated upon for him, through the influence of Mr. Forsyth and Judge Wayne; and further, to ask the serious question, what has Van Buren done, since that time, to entitle him to the first office of the world, when everybody believed he would have disgraced the only *sinecure one* we have in our government—the *only one* without responsibility, perfectly mechanical, requiring no judgment, and which any member of senate can and does fill, without any difficulty, when called to the chair? Second, It is said the Clark party, in the face of all the facts I have mentioned, as well as against their notorious opposition to him in the last election for the same office, in which they had an organized ticket against him, are now about to support this same Van Buren, *then* only fit for a

door-keeper, for the high and distinguished office of president of the United States! I cannot believe it till I see it. I know the operations that are going on in Georgia, and in its proper place will reveal them to the reader. They will not succeed: but if they do, it will prove what I said in my preface, that men will adhere to certain principles no longer than they serve a selfish purpose, and that *to-morrow* they will assume their "dead opposite," to undo what was done *yesterday*, for, as they then said, the public good. More of this hereafter.

The scheme of Mr. Crawford succeeded; it detached Van Buren from Adams; and from that day down, he was the fast friend of Crawford, in the true New York style of trickery, to the day of his death.

The result of that election is well known. Mr. Adams carried the day; and a most shameful and unfounded clamour was set up, that he had succeeded by a corrupt bargain with Mr. Clay. There were but three candidates before the House. Mr. Crawford's health and mind had given way, so much so, that for years after this event, his best friends declared that his election to the presidency would have been a calamity to the country; and those that urged his pretensions, under a know

ledge of his situation, incurred a reproach from which they have not as yet been wholly relieved. How, then, could Mr. Clay have been expected to put upon the people a president prostrated in body and mind? He was then left to choose between Jackson and Adams. The very proposition itself is enough to secure for the integrity of his course and his motives the most convincing proof. No man, who knew any thing of the abilities and morals of the two characters, can hold up his head for a moment, and say that such a *statesman* as *Mr. Clay* should have supported General Jackson in preference to Mr. Adams. It is one of those self-evident kind of cases upon which the mind cannot reason without surrendering its honesty; and when that is required, you must go to some other man than to Mr. Clay. Such kind of loose virtue belongs to Amos Kendall, Francis P. Blair, William B. Lewis, and Isaac Hill; men who take all sorts of ways, but that of honesty, to effect their objects, and then abuse every one else who will not do the same things.

The election over, in which Mr. Calhoun and his able South Carolina coadjutors had taken a decided part for General Jackson, parties began to form again. The very astonishing vote which General Jackson had obtained, made Van Buren

and his friends *stare* as if they had been shot at. He now found he had, for a wonder, made a great miscalculation; but he knew it could easily be repaired, by enlisting his great state, for the next campaign, in favour of Jackson. This was rendered the more plausible from the misfortune which had attended his own favourite, who, of course, was withdrawn from further competition. Add to this, Mr. Clay, whose great talents and virtue he both envied and dreaded, was now, from necessity and duty, connected with the political fate of Mr. Adams; and therefore he could hope for nothing from a quarter where his character was so well known, and where he had every reason to believe he could neither be treated with civility or trusted with safety. Jackson, of course, was his next man, but not until late in the action.

He had, however, no doubt much to his mortification, to play second fiddle to Mr. Calhoun in the approaching contest; for this last gentleman stood deservedly high with General Jackson, whose *political* fortunes he had done more to elevate than any other living man. The work went on, the battle raged; Calhoun, with his field-marshals, Hamilton, Hayne, and McDuffie, exerting every nerve, and found everywhere in the thickest of the open affray, while little Van, as he

is wont, performed all the spying, sapping and mining operations of the war. When the firing ceased, and the smoke had rolled away from the field of the engagement, the ground was found strewed with the dead bodies of Jackson's enemies, and he was loudly hailed as the victorious champion: to him it was another New Orleans *accident.*

CHAPTER IV.

In organizing his cabinet, Jackson had much difficulty, for every man in the nation, high and low, with an exception which will presently be mentioned, wanted an office; and they flocked around him for their reward. His South Carolina friends magnanimously retired, and promptly refused place: they had higher motives than personal considerations: the principles avowed by Jackson were the principles of Mr. Jefferson, and they were the principles of the South, without which they never would have entered into the Union, and without which they believe the Union will not endure: these they expected to foster and permanently settle in the administration of General Jackson, and that of Mr. Calhoun, to whom everybody looked, confirmed by his most triumphant election as vice-president, as his successor.

After the most anxious, and at one time almost hopeless consultation, the cabinet was formed; Martin Van Buren, then recently made governor of the great state of New York, being at its head,

in the high and honourable office of *secretary of state.*

His governor's station was speedily relinquished; for there was nothing after which he panted more ardently than to be placed at the EAR of so credulous an old man as Andrew Jackson, possessing, as he did, more growing power and popularity than any other man then figuring on the face of the globe. It was every thing to him; and unless an honest community will open their eyes to the dangerous and thickening plots that are fast ripening around them, it will land him in that exalted station, to the attainment of which, in the last ten years, he has bent all the powers of his political necromancy.

Mr. Calhoun was the evil genius of Van Buren; and although he pretended for this gentleman the utmost friendship, yet he was secretly, and *had been artfully,* laying his plans to destroy him. He saw full well that Mr. Calhoun was not only the favourite of General Jackson, but of the whole nation; and that the firm, bold, and adventurous stand which he had taken for the war, the splendour with which it terminated, the repeated token of their confidence in his election of vice-president, had, altogether, so firmly rooted him in their affections, that nothing but the most extraordinary

reverses could keep him from the executive chair. To effect this, however, or perish himself in the attempt, he was fully resolved. The most effectual way of succeeding was to separate him from General Jackson. If he could once destroy General Jackson's confidence in him, he was well aware he could enlist all that old man's prejudices and strong passions against him, and consequently direct the whole current of Jackson's popularity, great from his military achievements, but greater from his power and patronage, to his unavoidable overthrow. That he has too well succeeded, is denied by no one.

This deep, dark, and assassin-like plot was effected in the following manner. I shall briefly relate the facts, and then submit the proof, which, in my humble opinion, must convince every honourable and candid man, and occasion feelings the most revolting at the detestable act, who is not wholly swallowed up in impious adoration of General Jackson and his appointed successor, Martin Van Buren.

Mr. Van Buren well knew what an influence he held over William H. Crawford, by reason of having so zealously served him in his views upon the presidency; and he further knew that there was the most deadly feud between him and Mr.

Calhoun. Recollecting that Mr. Crawford was one of Mr. Monroe's cabinet ministers with Mr. Calhoun, he shrewdly suspected that in some of the cabinet's secret consultations—and it was well known they had many, concerning General Jackson's conduct during the Seminole war, and the capture of Florida—Calhoun had said or done something calculated to wound the feelings or military pride of Jackson, about which he was more sensitive than all other things together, he determined to ferret it out, if possible, and bring it to the knowledge of General Jackson. He also believed, as Mr. Crawford had lost his mind, in a great degree, there would be no great difficulty in making him *reveal the secrets* of the cabinet; and where they might be deficient for his purpose, by an artful training of an impaired intellect, lead it to whatever conclusion he desired.

With these abominable intentions, he and his little lieutenant, C. C. Cambreling, posted off to Georgia, directly after the adjournment of Congress, in March, 1827, (I again ask the reader to mark well the dates,) on a visit to his friend, Mr. Crawford, with the *pretended design* of ascertaining whether his health would admit of his running once more for the presidency. Down to this period, then, according to his own confession, General

Jackson ought to see that Van Buren was no friend of his. He arrived at Mr. Crawford's about the middle of April; and, realizing his full expectations, he there learned that in the cabinet discussions of 1818, (*nine years before*,) Mr. Calhoun had censured the conduct of General Jackson, and had actually spoken of punishing or reprehending him for taking Florida from the Spaniards without orders. This was enough for the genius of the little magician: arrangements were settled: Calhoun's election for vice-president was to be defeated, if possible; but if that could not be effected, then the facts just disclosed were to be retained and used in poisoning General Jackson's mind towards Calhoun, as soon as Mr. Van Buren could himself acquire the confidence of the old chieftain; and this he expected to do by going in directly for him, soul and body, for the presidency.

Mr. Crawford commenced writing to his friends in the western states, with a view to get them to use their influence to drop Mr. Calhoun for vice-president, upon the ground, among several others, that *Calhoun was unfriendly to Jackson.* His first letter was to Alfred Balch, Esq. of Tennessee, dated 14th of December, 1827. He let him know that Van Buren and Cambreling had been to see him, and he had authorized them to spread his

opinions on the approaching election. One other of these letters, addressed to George W. Campbell, Esq. dated in 1828, came to the view of General Daniel Newnan, a particular friend of both General Jackson and Mr. Calhoun, who happened to be then at Nashville; and seeing that a most infamous plot was on foot to destroy the latter, by blasting the friendship that existed between him and General Jackson, wrote immediately, on the 8th of January, 1829, to Wilson Lumpkin, Esq. then a member of Congress from Georgia, at Washington city, apprizing him of the designs of Mr. Crawford and others to destroy the friendly relations between General Jackson and Mr. Calhoun, and enclosed a copy of Mr. Crawford's letter to Balch.

On the 27th of January, 1829, upon the receipt of General Newnan's letter, Mr. Lumpkin addressed a note to Mr. Calhoun, enclosing an extract from Newnan's communication, and informed him of what was going on.

It will be recollected that at the date of Newnan's and Lumpkin's letters above mentioned, the election was over, and Jackson and Calhoun fully ascertained to have been elected; and therefore, their letters were not so much to caution Mr. Calhoun as to the intrigues going on against him concerning his election, they having failed; but to put

him upon his guard as to the further and other part of the plot, of ruining him in the confidence of General Jackson.

We now come to the other part of the plot. When Van Buren returned from visiting Mr. Crawford in Georgia, he directly communicated the intelligence he had received in that visit, to James A. Hamilton, one of the most active, ready, long-tried, indefatigable friends and partisans, as everybody knows, of Mr. Van Buren, from his first entrance upon the stage of politics to the present hour. Thereupon a plan was arranged, which was, that Hamilton should possess himself of the same information from Mr. Crawford, or from some friend of Mr. Crawford's, with a view to convey it to the president's ears, taking care to keep Mr. Van Buren entirely out of the scrape. Accordingly, Hamilton either *wrote* or *went* to Mr. Forsyth, and brought to his mind the subject in relation to the cabinet proceedings on the Seminole war; and wound up the business by requesting Mr. Forsyth to get a statement in writing, from Mr. Crawford, of the transactions as they actually occurred. It seems Mr. Crawford had also related to his friend, Mr. Forsyth, the same facts he had communicated to Mr. Van Buren: and the reader ought to be reminded that Mr. Forsyth is a very great friend

of Mr. Van Búren, expects to hold office under him, promises him the vote of Georgia; and there is a sneaking report that he anxiously looks towards the great state of New York to help to put him in the chair, when Van is done with it. Mr. Forsyth makes a statement to Mr. Hamilton of what Mr. Crawford had told *him;* but lest it should not be correct, he put the statement in writing, and, on the 16th of April, 1830, encloses it to Mr. Crawford, and requests him to say whether it is correct. Now the reader will doubtless perceive the plot thickening.

Mr. Crawford, on the 30th of April, 1830, returns for answer, that the statement, with but one exception, is correct, and that Mr. Forsyth was at liberty to show the same *to Mr. Calhoun*, by way of giving to the affair great fairness and openness, as it was about to be used—for what purpose? Ah, there's the *rub!* Can any man in his sober senses imagine any earthly reason for the using of this letter, over and beyond that of serving some dark, malignant, and murderous purpose? That it had a motive, an object, no one can deny. Then what was that motive, what was that object? Was it a virtuous one, an honourable and benevolent one? Why will not Mr. Hamilton and Forsyth name it? Why was it necessary to make an old man, im-

paired in his mind and memory, reveal the secrets of a cabinet—secrets that had rested unknown for eleven years, and had nearly passed away from the recollection of all concerned; after, too, the two great personages whose peace they were seeking to disturb, had contracted the warmest friendships, had nobly served each other, had never dreamed that any of their public acts or opinions, in which, doubtless, they had both acted honestly and conscientiously in their avowal, could be so tortured as to furnish materials for a conspiracy? That such conspiracy should end in a rupture of their long-standing affections, destroy the confidence between them, and, what is ten thousand times worse, remove the same confidence and affections from the bosom of one of the parties, to a secret enemy, a designing adversary, and at last and best, but an uncertain and an eleventh-hour friend.

As soon as Mr. Crawford's letter arrived, instead of showing it to Mr. Calhoun first, as directed, that he might probe into the matter, and ascertain, if he could, how it came to be written, how gotten up, and by whom, for what purpose, and that he might have a friendly interview with General Jackson, to show how he was about to be imposed upon, it was carried with unusual expedition to General Jackson; and he, ever ready upon excited

feelings, which are as easily aroused as a tiger's, was instantly persuaded to communicate it to Mr. Calhoun, in a cold, stiff, formal letter, evidently written in a temper of smothered resentment, and only civil from an *avised* regard for his official station. From such a letter, the artful managers were well satisfied all prospects of a conciliation would become perfectly hopeless. It was a committal from which there was no escape; and being the first vent through which the purposely inflamed revenge of a passionate old man was tearing its way, they knew one could as soon have stopped a man half down the falls of Niagara as to have stopped the furious current of his anger.

As was expected, the reply was not only unsatisfactory, but confirmed the old man's newly-created convictions, that Mr. Calhoun had been a wolf in sheep's clothing, had attempted to tarnish his military glory, had secretly aimed a deadly blow at his reputation; and feeling an increased provocation, he soon, to the unspeakable joy of his brutal deceivers, cut short all further correspondence or intercourse with Mr. Calhoun, stating, to use his own language, "understanding you now, no further communication is necessary."

The infamous work was finished, and everybody knows what a bitter and daily-increasing animosity

it has engendered in the bosom of General Jackson against one of the best and most serviceable friends he ever had in his whole private or political life. It is even thought and said by some, that his unnatural resentment against his own native state was to goad it into rebellion, that he might glut his revenge upon some of her favourite sons, for what he considered a triple crime, *unholiness* to him, *undutifulness* to the heir-apparent, and *ungraciousness* to the kitchen cabinet.

CHAPTER V.

HAVING made the statements of this remorseless intrigue, I proceed to submit the proofs, remarking, that if I should be a little tedious on this point, I hope I shall be excused, for I have a double object in view, not only to expose the machinations of one of the greatest intriguants in the world, but to show to the American people how much and how long they have suffered one of her most patriotic, virtuous, and talented statesmen, who has done as much service for his country as any other, to be injured and abused, to be traduced in character, and murdered in feelings; and all to gratify the caprices of a deceived old man, and to elevate the political fortunes of his selfish and insidious deceiver.

In Mr. Crawford's letter to Balch, dated 14th December, 1827, after he had his interview with Van Buren and Cambreling, in the previous April, he says, "My opinions upon the next presidential election are generally known. When Mr. Van Buren and Mr. Cambreling *made me a visit, last*

April, I authorized them upon every proper occasion to make these opinions known. The vote of the state of Georgia will, as certainly as that of Tennessee, be given to General Jackson, in opposition to Mr. Adams. The only difficulty that this state has upon this subject, is, that if Jackson should be elected, *Calhoun will come into power.* I confess, I am not apprehensive of such a result; for —— —— writes me, [who is this Mr. Blank?] 'Jackson ought to know, and if he does not, he shall know, that, at the Calhoun caucus, in Columbia, the term Military Chieftain was bandied about more flippantly than by H. Clay, and that the family friends of Mr. Calhoun were most active in giving it currency.'" Mr. Crawford concludes this letter by saying, "If you can ascertain that *Calhoun will not be benefited* by Jackson's election, you will do him a benefit by communicating the information to me."

This is a fair sample of the numerous letters addressed by Mr. Crawford to his friends in every direction, and occasioned General Newnan's letter to Mr. Lumpkin, of the 8th of January, 1829, in which he says, "W. H. C. has done Mr. Calhoun a great deal of injury, as well by his private machinations as his *extensive correspondence.* In addition to the letter which he wrote to Mr. Balch, a

copy of which I now enclose you, (and which has been seen by General Jackson,) [mark that, reader!] he, *a short time since*, wrote a letter to G. W. Campbell, proposing that Tennessee should vote for a third person for the vice-presidency, and requested Mr. Campbell to show the letter to General Jackson. I hope Mr. Calhoun will take the earliest opportunity of seeing General J. and putting all things straight; for I cannot believe, for one moment, the allegations of W. H. C."

As soon as Mr. Lumpkin received the above letter, he communicated it to Mr. Calhoun, in a letter dated on the 27th of the same month, and, among other things, remarks, "I am confident, the best interest of our common country requires, not only the harmonious and patriotic union of the two first officers of the government, but of every patriotic citizen of the whole country, to frown indignantly upon all *intriguers, managers, political jugglers,* and selfish politicians of every description, *who are disposed to divide and conquer.*" [Ah, Mr. Van Buren, disposed "to divide and conquer!"—he does not go for the doctrine "about this time," as the Almanac would say.] Mr Lumpkin continues, (and I beg the reader to pay particular attention to his sayings, for rumour states that Mr. Lumpkin is about to go along with some

of these same "political jugglers," concerning which I have something to say hereafter;) "I feel the more at liberty and authorized to make this communication, because *I know*, of my *own knowledge*, *you and your friends are misrepresented* on this subject. However, General Jackson himself must see and know the object of these shallow efforts. I do not know one conspicuous friend of yours, but what has constantly, zealously, and uniformly supported General Jackson, from the day that Pennsylvania declared in his favour to the present time. How, then, can it be possible that General Jackson can suspect the friendship, constancy, or sincerity of you or your friends? No, he cannot, he will not, he does not. I have quite too much confidence in the General to believe such idle tales. Nevertheless, it is proper for you and him both to be apprized of the *machinations of the mischievous*. You are at liberty to use this communication in any way you please."

The reader will doubtless perceive that Mr. Lumpkin is of the opinion that more persons, besides Mr. Crawford, are concerned in this intrigue, by various expressions in his letter, but particularly the words "intriguers, managers, political jugglers, and selfish politicians." Mr. Crawford could not do all Lumpkin forewarns Mr. Calhoun

of, by himself. Now, who are these jugglers? Mr. Crawford tells Mr. Balch that Van Buren and Cambreling have been with him, and have authority to spread his opinions; we shall see, in the further prosecution of the subject, that *no one* but *them* and their *most particular friends* are found connected with Mr. Crawford, and no one served or benefited by the intrigue *but them*, or rather, Martin Van Buren. Now it would be very strange that a plot should be gotten up for somebody else, who never appears in any part of its progress, who, in its beginning, continuance, and ending, is entirely lost sight of, and that finally, and altogether by accident, it results wholly in favour of another person! The most diseased credulity cannot stand this. The question, 'For whose good?' will rush into the mind; and when we see 'for whose good,' and also see this character frequently flitting across the scenes while the plot is going on, now prompting an actor, then dropping a curtain, human nature, weak and wicked as it is, cannot be made to believe he has no hand in the murder.

The first appearance of Mr. Forsyth (unfortunately a most intimate and particular friend of Mr. Van Buren's) in this business, is to be found in Mr. Crawford's letter to him, of the 30th of April, 1830, giving the account of Mr. Calhoun's treachery

to General Jackson, in which he says, "YOUR LETTER OF THE 16TH was received by Sunday's mail, together with its ENCLOSURE." Now, as we are drawing to the close of the play, where the blood and fuss takes place, I beg the reader to keep his eyes wide awake, and he will see how completely this nasty affair points to the little magician as its contriver and finisher. Things, down to this time, being previously all well arranged, Mr. Crawford is addressed, and thus he answers Mr. Forsyth and his *enclosure:* "I recollect having conversed with you at the time and place, and upon the subject in that *enclosure* stated; [where, and for what purpose? the reader will naturally inquire. It was a very old transaction!] but I have not a distinct recollection of what I said to you, but I am certain there is one error in your statement of that conversation to Mr. ———. [who is this Mr. Blank?] I recollect distinctly [only eleven years had passed, and during part of that time he had laboured under a long and most dangerous spell of sickness, that seized and left his mind impaired] what passed in the cabinet meeting referred to in your letter to Mr. ———. [Who, I repeat, is *this* Mr. Blank? is it the same Blank above? I insist upon it, we ought to have a *handbill* of all the players; we cannot understand the play without.] Mr. Calhoun's pro-

position in the cabinet was, that General Jackson should be *punished* in some form, or *reprehended* in some form; I am not positively certain which. [Though he has a "distinct recollection" of what passed in the cabinet.] As Mr. Calhoun did not propose to *arrest* General Jackson, I feel confident that I could not have made use of the word in my relation to you of the circumstances which transpired in the cabinet."

I wonder if the reader can be so shallow as not to perceive the reason for all this wonderful particularity—this singular exactness in telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. I feel surprised that such a man as Mr. Crawford should think his credibility needed any such propping; but doubtless he acted under *advisement;* for Mr. Crawford, though an honest, open man, like General Jackson, was *duped,* and it was very necessary that there should be the *appearance* of very great *fairness* in a paper that was to be used for very great *foulness.* And, pray, what was the material difference? Mr. Calhoun, it seems, did not say that General Jackson ought to be *arrested,* but that he ought to be *punished,* or *reprehended.* Does General Jackson, with all *his* sagacity and critical nicety, perceive any difference in the two terms, so far as his honour or feelings are con-

cerned? Would an *arrest* be of any consequence to him, if he was *punished* or *reprehended?* or could he well be *punished* without an arrest? It is the punishment that inflicts the real stigma. Indeed, this intelligent distinction reminds me of *Barney O'Blanigan's*, when he explained that he did not say "that *Patrick McFardin* ought to be *hung*, but that his *neck* ought to be *stretched.*"

On the 13th of May, 1830, General Jackson communicates a copy of Mr. Crawford's letter to Mr. Calhoun, accompanied with a letter of the kind and character before described, in which he asks an explanation, plainly implying that he conceives him a hypocrite, and very indifferent whether the answer is satisfactory or not; thus pre-judging him before he is heard.

To this letter, on the same day, Mr. Calhoun replied, merely acknowledging its receipt, and promising a fuller answer at a more leisure moment.

On the 29th of May the full answer was made; and among other things, remarking upon the plot that was secretly in operation against him, and Mr. Forsyth's implied agency in it, he says to General Jackson, "On a review of this subject, it is impossible not to be struck with the time and mode of bringing on this correspondence. It is now twelve years since the termination of the Seminole war.

Few events in our history have caused so much excitement, or been so fully discussed, both in and out of Congress. During a greater part of this long period, Mr. Crawford was a prominent actor on the public stage, seeing and hearing all that occurred, and without restraint, according to his own statement, to disclose freely all he knew; yet not a word is uttered by him in your behalf; but now, when you have triumphed over all difficulties, when you no longer require defence, he for the first time breaks silence, not to defend you, but to accuse one who gave you every support, in your hour of trial, in his power, when you were fiercely attacked, if not by Mr. Crawford himself, at least by some of his most confidential and influential friends. Nor is the manner less remarkable than the time. Mr. Forsyth, a senator from Georgia, here, in his place, writes to Mr. Crawford his letter covering certain enclosures, and referring to certain correspondence and conversations in relation to my conduct in the cabinet deliberation on the Seminole question. Mr. Crawford answers, correcting the statements alluded to in some instances, and confirming and amplifying in others; which answer he authorizes Mr. Forsyth to show me, if he pleased. Of all this, Mr. Forsyth gives me not the slightest intimation, though in the habit of almost daily

intercourse in the senate; and instead of showing me Mr. Crawford's letter, as he was authorized to do, I hear of it, for the first time, by having a copy put into my hand under cover of your letter of the 13th instant—a copy with important blanks, and unaccompanied with Mr. Forsyth's letter, with its enclosure, to which Mr. Crawford's is in answer.

"Why is this so? Why did not Mr. Forsyth himself show me the letter—the original letter? By what authority did he place a copy in your hands? None is given by the writer. Why is your name interposed? Was it to bring me into conflict with the president of the United States? If the object of the correspondence between Mr Crawford and Mr. Forsyth be to impeach my conduct, as it would seem to be, by what rule of justice am I deprived of evidence material to my defence, and which is in the hands of my accusers; of a copy of Mr. Forsyth's letter, with the enclosures; of a statement of the conversation and correspondence of the two individuals whose names are in blank in the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter furnished me? Why not inform me who they are? Their testimony might be highly important, and even their *names alone* might throw much light on this mysterious affair.

"I must be frank. I feel that I am deprived of

important rights by the interposition of your name, of which I have just cause to complain. It deprives me of important advantages which would otherwise belong to my position. By the interposition of your name, the communication which would exist between Mr. Forsyth and myself, had he placed Mr. Crawford's letter in my hands, as he was authorized to do, is prevented, and I am thus deprived of the right which would have belonged to me in that case, and which he could not in justice withhold, of being placed in possession of all the material facts and circumstances connected with this affair. In thus complaining, it is not my intention to attribute to you any design to deprive me of so important an advantage. I know the extent of your public duties, and how completely they engross your attention. They have not allowed you sufficient time for reflection in this case, of which evidence is afforded by the ground that you assume in placing the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter in my hand, which you state was submitted by his authority. I do not so understand him: the authority was, as I conceive, to Mr. Forsyth, and not to yourself, and applied to the original letter, and not to the copy, both of which, as I have shown, are very important in this case, and not mere matters of form. I have asked the ques-

tion, Why is this affair brought up at this late period, and in this remarkable manner? It merits consideration, at least from myself. I am in the habit of speaking my sentiments and opinions freely, and I see no cause which ought to restrain me on the present occasion. I should be blind, not to see that this whole affair is a political manœuvre, in which the design is that you should be the instrument and myself the victim, but in which the real actors are carefully concealed by an artful movement. A naked copy, with the names referred to in blank, affords slender means of detection; while, on the contrary, had I been placed, as I ought to have been, in possession of all the facts which I was entitled to be, but little penetration would probably have been required to see through the whole affair. The names which are in blank might of themselves, through their political associations, point directly to the contrivers of this scheme. I wish not to be misunderstood. I have too much respect for your character to suppose you capable of participating in the slightest degree in a political intrigue. Your character is of too high and generous a cast to resort to such means, either for your own advantage or that of others. This the contrivers of the plot well knew; but they hoped, through your generous attributes, through

your lofty and jealous regard for your character, to excite feelings through which they expected to consummate their designs. Several indications forewarned me, long since, that a blow was meditated against me; I will not say from the quarter from which this comes; but in relation to this subject, more than two years since, I had a correspondence with James A. Hamilton, the district attorney for the southern district of New York, on the subject of the proceedings of the cabinet on the Seminole war, which, though it did not then excite particular attention, has since, in connexion with other circumstances, served to direct my eye to what was going on."

These remarks of Mr. Calhoun to the president so plainly implicated Mr. Forsyth in the conspiracy, that he addressed a letter to him on the 31st of May, commencing in the following manner: "Having, at the request of the president to be informed what took place in the cabinet of Mr. Monroe on the subject of the Seminole campaign, laid before him a copy, except the omission of a name, of a letter from Mr. Crawford, which has since been communicated to you, the president has thought it just to permit me to read your answer of the 29th instant, to his letter enclosing it. * * * * * * Your answer to the president

seems to be founded upon the presumption that there is some conspiracy secretly at work to do injury to your character, and to destroy your political consequence. With this presumption I have no concern; but the circumstances under which my name is introduced by you render it proper that I should be distinctly informed if this charge of conspiracy against you is intended to apply to me."

Mr. Calhoun, on the 1st of June, 1830, answered this letter, and said, "That there are those who intend that this affair shall operate against me politically, by causing a rupture between myself and the president, and thereby affect, if possible, my standing with the nation, I cannot doubt, for reasons which I have stated in my answer to the president: but I must be permitted to express my surprise that you should suppose that my remarks comprehended you, when they expressly referred to those *whose names* did *not appear* in the transaction, and consequently excluded you."

Mr. Forsyth's letter of the 31st of May, to Mr. Calhoun, was placed in the latter gentleman's hands, on the steamboat, as he was leaving Washington for his home; it was answered the next day; and when he arrived at home, on the 22d of June, he addressed a letter to the president, enclos-

ing a copy of Mr. Forsyth's, remarking, "I had supposed, from the complexion of your letters to me, that the copy of Mr. Crawford's letter to Mr. Forsyth had been placed by the latter in your hands, without any previous act or agency on your part; but by Mr. Forsyth's letter to me, I am informed that such is not the fact. It seems that he acted as your agent in the affair. Under this new aspect of this matter, I conceive that I have the right to claim of you to be put in possession of all the additional information which I might have fairly demanded of Mr. Forsyth, had the correspondence been originally between him and myself. I make this application solely from the desire of obtaining the means of enabling me to unravel this mysterious affair. Facts and circumstances, light of themselves, may, when viewed in connexion, afford important light as to the origin and object of what I firmly believe to be a base political intrigue, got up by those who regard your reputation and the public interest much less than their own personal advancement."

Before answering the above letter, the president had received a letter from Mr. Forsyth, the receipt of which he acknowledged on the 7th of June, in the following manner: "I have received your letter of the 2d instant, enclosing a copy of your letter

to Mr. Calhoun, of the 31st ult., and his reply thereto.

"In the letter which you have addressed to Mr. Calhoun, you stated as follows, to wit: 'Having, at the request of the president to be informed what took place in the cabinet of Mr. Monroe, on the subject of the Seminole campaign, laid before him a copy, except the omission of a name, of a letter from Mr. Crawford,' &c. This is construed by Mr. Calhoun into a declaration that I requested you to furnish me with the information. I am satisfied it was not by you so intended, and I would be glad you would so explain it to him. I never conversed with you upon this subject previous to the time when you sent me Mr. Crawford's letter. The facts are these: I had been informed that Mr. Crawford had made a statement concerning this business, which had come to the knowledge of Colonel *James A. Hamilton.* [A most conspicuous character in this drama.] On meeting with Colonel Hamilton, I inquired of him, and received for answer that he had, but remarked that he did not think it proper to communicate without the consent of the writer. I answered, that, being informed that the marshal of this district had, to a friend of mine, [who was that?] made a similar statement to that said to have been made by Mr.

Crawford, I would be glad to see Mr. Crawford's statement, and desired he would write, and obtain his consent."

The reader will perceive how difficult it is to get along with a villanous intrigue. Right at this spot the conspirators like to have been blown. They had carried the matter a little too far; it brought out the old chief as hot as pepper, and he reveals some precious facts. He says, "I had been informed that Mr. Crawford's statement had come to the knowledge of Colonel James A. Hamilton." Now, who informed the president of this? Recollect, Mr. Calhoun says to the president in his letter of the 29th of May, 1830, "that *more than two years since*" James A. Hamilton had written to him "on the subject of the proceedings of the cabinet on the Seminole war, which, though it did not then excite particular attention, [the correspondence being insidiously conducted, with a highly professed regard for Mr. Calhoun,] has since, in connexion with other circumstances, served to direct my eye to what was going on." Now every one must perceive that this "more than two years since," exactly corresponds with the time when Mr. Van Buren returned, after a considerable tour in the southern states, from his friendly visit to Mr. Crawford. Does any one

doubt that he received his information from Van Buren? And who does not see at once, that he went about getting the facts from some other quarter than from Van Buren, for the purpose of being used, as agreed upon by Van Buren, Cambreling, and Crawford, while together in Georgia? Failing in getting them from Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Forsyth, the well-known confidant and bosom friend of Mr. Crawford, was resorted to, and with success. General Jackson was duped; he was a perfect and unconscious instrument in the abominable affair; and as soon as the first indication appeared of connecting him with fishing up this long-buried transaction, his pride became alarmed, and he instantly made them take back what he conceived, no doubt, a base insinuation.

On the 17th of June, 1830, Mr. Forsyth answered General Jackson's letter, and says, "I did not intend to convey to Mr. Calhoun the idea that any personal communication ever took place between us, prior to the date of Mr. Crawford's letter relative to the occurrences in Mr. Monroe's cabinet, on the question of the Seminole war. What I intended he should know, and I suppose will now understand, if I have inadvertently misled him, is, that I did not volunteer to procure the information contained in Mr. Crawford's letter, but that it was

obtained *for your use*, in compliance with your request. *Major Hamilton* requested me, *in your name*, to give to you what I had previously given to him—Mr. Crawford's account of the transaction. With this request I complied, after having first obtained Mr. Crawford's consent, and received from him his correction of a mistake I had made in repeating his verbal statement."

It will be very obvious, from the above letter, as well as the inquiry made of Mr. Calhoun, that Mr. Forsyth felt much solicitude about being suspected of having an agency in the plot then going on, or being considered a "volunteer" in the matter. But Mr. Forsyth owed it to himself, as well as to Mr. Calhoun, to have stated how it was he came to have any conversation at all with Mr. Crawford on this old and long-forgotten subject, who first requested him to procure this information; how he happened to first broach it to Colonel Hamilton; what was contained in his letter to Mr. Crawford, and, indeed, to have furnished a copy of that letter; whether he sought this information from Mr. Crawford without ascertaining the motive of the seeker of it; whether he felt no *curiosity* (you know I have said curiosity is the greatest thing in creation) to know what was meant or intended by dragging up an old cabinet secret,

before he consented to become an instrument for that purpose. I do not know how that wonderful thing, curiosity, affects Mr. Forsyth; but never did mortal man have a greater one than I have to know exactly how this thing took place. I *believe* it took place just as I have named it, and so I think my readers will; but yet I have an amazing itching to know how the parties talked together; what was their calculations; what sort of gestures they made; if they whispered to one another; if they looked to the door, to see if any one was coming; if they winked and nodded at the suggestion of a good idea, when the project was sifted *pro* and *con;* and finally, when the thing was all fixed to their notion, whether little Van didn't look as smiling as a basket of chips. I confess, this is my curiosity.

On the 19th of July, 1830, General Jackson answered Mr. Calhoun's letter of the 22d of June preceding, and enclosed him Mr. Forsyth's explanation, and then notified him that he closed the "correspondence for ever."

CHAPTER VI.

Although General Jackson brought the correspondence to a close on his part, yet so did not Mr. Calhoun, until he had given him a reply; and if General Jackson has any feelings, it must have sunk deep into his heart, and will there fester until he ceases to feel at all; until intrigues, and plots, and conspiracies shall all be over with him: and when fading nature shall finally sink away from his vision, Van Buren's dark and traitorous image should be the last object that settles in the beamless gloom of death.

On the 25th of August, Mr. Calhoun, in one of the closing paragraphs of his last letter to General Jackson, remarks, "You well know the disinterested, open, and fearless course which myself and my friends were pursuing at this very period, [alluding to the time when Mr. Crawford was writing his letters against him, some of which had been shown to General Jackson,] and the weight of enmity which it drew down upon us from your opponents. Little did I then suspect that these

secret machinations were carrying on against me at Nashville, or that such *propositions* could be *ventured to be made to you*, or, if ventured, without being *instantly* disclosed to me. Of this, however, I complain not, nor do I intend to recriminate; but I must repeat the expression of my surprise, that you should apply to an individual whom you knew, from such decisive proof, to be actuated by the most inveterate hostility towards me, for information of my course in Mr. Monroe's cabinet. It affords to my mind conclusive proof that you had permitted your feelings to be alienated by the artful movements of those who have made you the victim of their intrigue, long before the commencement of this correspondence."

I appeal to the candid reader to say if he ever heard or read of a baser plot, or one more fully exposed. Whatever may be his prejudices against Mr. Calhoun, from any cause, has he ever known a more abused and injured man? Great efforts have been made by his enemies to divert public attention from the infamous treatment he received from this cabal, by directing it to what is called his nullification principles. This is all a miserable sham. While Mr. Calhoun and General Jackson were on terms of friendship, their political opinions were the same. General Jackson was as much a nulli-

fier as he was; and can the public want any better proof of it than this most notorious and undenied fact, that when General Hayne, the then bosom-friend of both General Jackson and Mr. Calhoun, delivered his famous speech on Foot's resolution, in which he took great pains to assert and maintain the doctrines of nullification, as had been previously expounded by Mr. Calhoun himself, which every one will see by comparison, General Jackson, with his own sign-manual, wrote to General Hayne a highly complimentary letter, expressly declaring that he had promulgated the true principles of our government, and that he would have his speech printed upon satin, and hung up in his chamber. After this, who does not see that all the farce about nullification is gotten up merely to hide a most villanous transaction? Yes, General Jackson has been made to forego his acknowledged political principles; to violate the pledges made to the party who placed him in power; to repudiate that strict construction of the constitution with which he commenced his administration; to separate himself from his oldest and warmest friends; and finally, to seek the blood of the citizens of his own native state, merely to consummate a revenge, the more keenly whetted because originally without a cause and prosecuted without reason, upon an individual

who had never harmed him, but whose highest offence was his friendship and service.

Will any one now say Mr. Van Buren has been wrongfully abused? Will they say he is not entitled to the name of Manager, of Magician? Mr. Lumpkin considered, and so called him, six years ago, an *intriguer, manager,* and *political juggler;* and, if reports be true, he will soon have it to say, from personal experience, he is the prince of *magicians;* for he is about to become the warm friend and supporter of this intriguer, manager, and political juggler, who by his artifices succeeded in destroying the political prospects of a *friend,* of whom he himself declared, "he *knew, of his own knowledge,* to be *misrepresented.*"

The case of Mr. Lumpkin is so curious, and furnishes such a beautiful little illustration of our hero's powers of conjuration, that I must, as promised before, now give it to the inquisitive reader. To work changes and charms upon the ignorant is what might be expected; but to do so upon the knowing and experienced, sustained by a full knowledge of the operator's art, and propped with a violent prejudice against his juggling character, must be the very *quintessence* of *magic.* To the case.

I have already informed the reader that the state

of Georgia has been long torn by parties, the first names of which were the Crawford and Clark parties; they afterwards assumed the name of the Troup and Clark parties. To the first of these Mr. Forsyth and Wayne belonged, and were among its principal leaders; to the last, Governor Lumpkin belonged, and was its main and strongest prop, being the only individual of his party who could ever obtain office. The Clark party were evidently in the back ground; the power and control of the state government belonged to the other party, and they used it with no sparing selfishness. Mr. Forsyth and Wayne got every thing they wanted; and being politicians from profession, their demands were far from being light. Having gone through all the favours the state of Georgia could confer on them, they turned their attention to another quarter, and determined to drive a *trade* with the federal government. In looking out for the best facilities and safest correspondents to ensure success to their business, they very sagaciously fixed upon the house of Martin Van Buren & Co., a Dutch firm in New York, but largely concerned in a profitable business with some *thriving dealers* in every sort of political merchandise, but particularly of *hardware*, at the seat of government.

To the fortunes of Mr. Van Buren they con

nected themselves, warmly supported him for the vice-presidency, and by their influence had little or no difficulty in getting their party in Georgia to do so too, against, however, the decided and violently-contested opposition of the Clark party. Mr. Calhoun was formerly an idol of this party, and they could never forget the cruel treatment he had received from Van Buren, as well as how much Van Buren had been the tool of their old adversary, Mr. Crawford, in his schemes of political aggrandizement.

When General Jackson separated from Mr. Calhoun, and found it necessary to pursue him with the full weight of his vengeance, for the sake, as Van Buren desired, of his final and complete overthrow, so that he might never be in his way, he was compelled to resort to measures, which, as before stated, violated all his previous opinions as to what belonged to the rights of the states. His proclamation outraged, as the state-rights party contended, all the principles of the republican school. It restored, and as it were by magic, the whole federal doctrines; even went farther than the federalists had claimed; and as a proof of this effect, it was hailed by them in the most transporting manner, all over the Union. The lamb and the lion laid down together. It prostrated the

structure, at a single blow, which the state-rights party had been rearing with great pains and toil, for years, to serve as a barrier against what they considered encroachments upon the rights of the states. This, take notice, was the view of southern politicians. Very many honest men differed from them, and believed the proclamation to be right. But as they considered themselves greatly aggrieved by this measure, they deemed it sufficient cause of rupture with the administration. The state-rights party said it brought them and the federalists together without their consent, and what was worse, exacted a complete surrender of all their long-cherished doctrines, and substituted in their place the very principles they had for years opposed, and successfully conquered. Under this, *their view* of the subject, the state-rights party of Georgia, of which Mr. Forsyth and Wayne had been conspicuous members, and often received the highest tokens of their confidence, determined to withdraw its support from the administration. This, while it was wormwood and gall to Forsyth and Wayne, was milk and honey to the Clark party; for, upon General Jackson's personal popularity, and the power and patronage of his office, they built the highest hopes, and confidently expected that the day of their deliverance was at hand from

their long-endured bondage to the Crawford and Troup party. They were not disappointed. Forsyth and Wayne could not consent, though the proclamation, and the proceedings bottomed upon it, violated all the principles they had contended for while acting in the Troup party; most palpably contradicted the tenets upon which one was made senator and the other a representative in Congress; yet to give up the bright prospects of office, which an industrious and dutiful course of conduct to the kitchen cabinet had secured for them, and which, if not fully realized under Jackson, would certainly fall upon them in the next administration, under their friend and patron, Martin Van Buren, was what they could not look upon with the least composure. What to do they knew not for the moment. They saw by the signs, that the state-rights party would not sustain their course. They well knew if they would give up General Jackson, who had been warmly supported by them, and that from principle, they could not possibly stick to Van Buren, who had been his evil genius in effecting the change of his opinions, so obnoxious to their former doctrines.

After consulting with their friends at Washington city, Van Buren at their head, who has always a *head* for contrivance, this ingenious device was

struck out, founded upon the following elements: 1. Forsyth and Wayne had a number of warm personal friends who would go with them on any and all occasions, and of course, carry a number of others who are led more by their sympathies and friendships than by principle or judgment 2. They had got every thing from Georgia they wanted; and their highest hopes were fixed (and indeed, half attained by their faithful services) on the federal government. They therefore had no further use for any party in Georgia, farther than as they would advance the foregoing views; and this, one party could do as well as another, because it required no principle. 3. In looking for such a party, they said, (and here I wish it to be distinctly understood that I give no opinion of my own, I only give their reasonings and conclusions,) that such an instrument could be found in the Clark party; for, they said, it had been so long kept under the hatches, and had no higher objects than the attainment of state offices, if they could only get the power of the state for the last mentioned purpose, they would be very willing to lend themselves to the accomplishment of any views Mr. Forsyth and Wayne might have on the favours of the general government. They would even take Van Buren for president, whom they had formerly

believed only fit for a "door-keeper," and whom the leader of the party had pronounced a "political juggler." 4. That by Mr. Forsyth and Wayne's going over to these, with their followers, they would constitute a majority, and then the consideration of the bargain would be, the Clark party should have the power of the state, and the seceders the loaves and fishes of the federal government; they believing, however, that their principal men, being much the smartest, as they said, would share very largely with the old Clark party in the higher offices of the state, to keep up the reputation and character of that party, not remarkable, as they said, for either talents or honesty.

These premises being settled upon and approved, the project was put in operation; very many of the honest and disinterested members of the Clark party being wholly ignorant of the terms, which were only confided to a few of the leaders, among whom, it is said, Governor Lumpkin is one, and that he and other leaders will go in for Van Buren as president, and carry the party, and thus involve them in one of the most bare-boned, bald-faced, hollow-eyed inconsistencies that ever disgraced man or party. As I said before, I cannot believe it. It requires such a hardihood, such a scarcity of shame—a principle of which the brute creation

is not destitute—such courage against ridicule, such a capacity for enduring infamy, I cannot credit the notion that a man, I care not what may be his love of office, how deceitful he may have been, how much he may have imposed upon the people, how artful his practices may be to keep on both sides and all sides of a question, he cannot stand such inconsistency as this. What! a man who has called another an intriguer, a manager, a political juggler, whose motto was to "divide and conquer;" a man who knows and says his bosom friend has "been grossly misrepresented" by this self-same juggler, whose friend has been cruelly destroyed by the very "machinations of the mischievous," of which he warned that friend; the man who declared, that "the best interest of our common country requires, not only the harmonious and patriotic union of the two first officers of the government, but of *every patriotic citizen* of the whole country, to *frown indignantly* upon *all intriguers, managers*, and *political jugglers*, of every description," having Martin Van Buren specially in his eye at the time, is now about to unite with another party to support these very principles, nay, the very man who occasioned his denunciation! It cannot be. It is to be hoped, for the honour of our species, that poor human

nature has yet got that step of shameless prostitution to take, and, to prevent which, it is not entirely out of the reach of some virtuous influence.

Sure I am, that whatever their leaders may do, the honest part of the Clark party—and they are doubtless as numerous as what usually belongs to most parties—cannot be brought to such disgrace, especially when they have a candidate in their own neighbourhood, whose general principles are theirs; whose virtues and talents his very enemies admit; whose purity of life and unambitious views give the sure pledge of faithful service, upon whom they and their former political opponents may meet, and lay down their arms of warfare. The result of the presidential contest in Georgia will in a great measure test or refute a proposition I laid down in my preface, that there is no such thing as "*principle.*"

Before I quit this part of the subject, I have something to say to the magnanimous state of South Carolina. Will they, upon the facts just shown in relation to their much-wronged and injured son—whose talents and services have shed upon the whole nation, but particularly upon herself, such unfading lustre—suffer his mortal enemy to triumph over him, by the accomplishment of

the very purpose he had in view in his too well meditated and successful machination, aimed with effect at his destruction, because they are subjected, as they contend, to a choice of evils? Can this be safe doctrine? Because we cannot obtain all we want in the effort to get away from the worst possible state of degradation, we are willing to remain in that condition rather than mount to a situation of acknowledged amelioration! Because we cannot save the whole cargo, we will suffer the ship to go down rather than throw overboard a part!*

* I think I can put a case that must satisfy the most scrupulous mind. Suppose a vessel driven by the winds right towards a shoal or a quicksand, and there are three persons aboard who pretend they can direct her course so as to avoid the threatened danger. The crew is divided into three parties, each fixing their confidence on the different pretenders above mentioned. The smallest party, unfortunately, have their favourite knocked overboard, leaving but two, in one of whom they have not the least confidence, and believe firmly he will sink the ship upon the rocks they are so rapidly approaching. As to the other, they have not the same distrust but on the contrary, many good reasons to believe, not so much from perfect skill, though greatly better than the other, as from the greater inducements to exert himself to save the vessel: does any man believe that such party ought to fold their arms, and let that individual take charge of the vessel, upon whose conduct they admit and expect the certain destruction of the whole crew and cargo, because they will not join in the support of *him* in which there is *possible* if not *probable* safety? For my part, I cannot understand such logic. This case applies as well to the Nationals as to the Nullifiers, and let them see well to it.

But to you I would say, whatever may be your honest scruples on this subject, they ought all to vanish, when the fame and feelings of your illustrious Calhoun are so vitally concerned; provided, in so doing, no dishonourable concession is made.

CHAPTER VII.

We proceed now to the relation of another remarkable event connected with the political life of our hero, in which the same successful power of intrigue is played off upon the man he considered his rival, and yet in his way.

When General Jackson was elected, Mr. Calhoun and his friends had contributed so eminently to his success, that his cabinet claimed a large share of advisers from that class; and as the perfidy I have just been describing had not then taken effect, it was filled by a majority from his ranks. Ingham, Branch, and Berrien were decidedly not of the true New York politicians, but they were nevertheless certain to be on the honest side, be that where it may. Governed, therefore, by that rule, Van Buren well knew he had no chance for their influence; and he easily saw, that with such materials, so near the president, justly entitled to his fullest confidence, and so much in his way, the deep design already narrated stood in great danger of defeat, unless things could be altered, and a cabinet

more to his notion readjusted. This was one of his first cares, and he began early to lay his plans to blow them up. Fortunately for him, one of the cabinet, Eaton, was, from weakness and misfortune united, a most fit instrument for his purpose. The only alternative left him was to enlist the aid of higher influence; and this, Van Buren, with an eye ever open to his own advantage, readily perceived. Without family himself, and little or nothing at stake, so far as the moralities and refined courtesies of social life were concerned, he was determined to bring Mrs. Eaton into the intercourse of the virtuous circles of Washington, or, what he would much prefer, turn the failure of his scheme to his own account. To this end he commenced the work. He knew that Eaton, by his having written the life of General Jackson, his everlasting devotion to him, mingled with a perpetual current of flattery—than whom, there is not another living mortal who loves it as much as General Jackson—had acquired a wonderful influence over the old man, of which his appointment as secretary of war afforded the most astonishing proof.

All the heads of department, together with the vice-president, and their families, had refused all intercourse with Eaton's family; and to show tha

it was not persecution, even a part of the president's own female family had done and continued to do so likewise. Van Buren took occasion to visit Eaton and his wife frequently, was unusually attentive to Mrs. Eaton, sought all opportunities, public and private, to treat her with marked civility; but all would not do, public sentiment remained inexorable. Van Buren changed his mode of operation; he often visited the president, and always made the unhappy situation of Mrs. Eaton the theme of his conversation. He spoke of it as a great cruelty, that she was a much-injured woman, that she had a lovely family of little daughters, who were unkindly cut off from the common courtesies of society. He assailed the old man's feelings incessantly on this subject; how it was preying, not only upon the feelings of this unfornate lady, but that it was murdering the peace of mind of General Eaton, the warm and devoted friend of General Jackson. His touching appeals had the desired effect; he saw he had worked sufficiently upon the old man's sympathies to bring things to an issue. He at length said to General Jackson that the treatment used by the other heads of department towards General Eaton and his family, amounted to a disrespect of the chief magistrate himself; that as he had selected General

Eaton as one of his confidential advisers, his own honour was implicated in the choice of a minister with whom the other members of the cabinet refused to associate; that if he, General Jackson, the head of the nation, could associate with the family of General Eaton, the rest of his cabinet could not, without an act of presumption, refuse to do so too; that he ought to exact at least this much respect to his counsellors and companions; to persevere in a contrary course was to signify to the world that they held themselves superior to the president in the choice of their company. This kind of logic, and much more stuff of a similar nature, had the effect intended; for the president resolved that Mrs. Eaton should visit and be visited by the rest of the cabinet officers and their families.

One among the first occasions he took to carry this resolution into effect, was to send for Governor Branch, and to ask of him the reason why Mrs. Eaton had not been invited to a party which he had lately given at his house; to which inquiry, Governor Branch, with his accustomed firmness and independence, replied, because she was not fit to be the associate of virtuous females. The president intimated that an arrangement must and should be made, by which she should *conditionally* receive the honours due to her rank and station, and

that the cabinet should hear from him upon the subject. Governor Branch left him with a proud disdain of any threats which he had made on the subject, firmly resolved to quit his office rather than yield a hair's-breadth of his personal rights, or the rights of his family, in the matter.

A meeting of the cabinet was requested at a private house, perhaps at that of one of the ministers, to which Colonel R. M. Johnson, a great peace-maker, was sent as an ambassador, with General Jackson's proposition on this all-important subject of having a female visited, contrary to the rules which a well-regulated moral society have established to secure and preserve the boundaries between vice and virtue.

The message was received, and, as was to have been expected, treated with contempt. It amounted to this, that Mrs. Eaton should be received into society on certain *public occasions*. These honourable, highminded men considered it a very little business for a president of the United States to be busying himself about the civilities that should be paid to a woman who had forfeited them, as the community in which she lived believed. They considered that it was a matter that ought to be left entirely to the wholesome discipline of that virtuous public sentiment which had always very

safely and properly regulated such matters. The president nor his cabinet had nothing to do with the affair, and they were rendering themselves perfectly ridiculous in the eyes of the nation by giving so much importance to such a very trifling concern. But so did not think Mr. Van Buren and the president. The affair had produced a very serious coolness in the intercourse between the members of the cabinet; and it was very evident that poor General Eaton could not live in any peace, either with the rest of his associates or the society of Washington. All Van Buren wanted was to get rid of the three members, supposed by him to be deeply in the interest of Calhoun, and who might by possibility so win upon the affections and confidence of the president as to counteract his deep-laid schemes, by showing the president that he was imposed upon. Now was the time to strike the blow that would free him from the fears and suspicions above entertained. He was resolved to make a great show of disinterestedness, and therefore concerted with Eaton, who was compelled to resign for his own peace, the following plan: Eaton was, when he tendered his resignation, to work upon the old man's feelings by representing how unkindly he had been treated. Van Buren was to resign, purely because there was a division in the

cabinet, which might embarrass the measures of the administration; and that as *office* was of no *consequence* to *him, compared* with the *honour and reputation of the president,* he was very willing to give place to another cabinet, in which there would be greater *unity.* It was no part of his design to leave the others in office; and therefore, by playing upon the sympathies and prejudices of General Jackson, they arranged the whole matter with him, that he was to let them resign, send Van Buren to England, and dismiss the other three; Barry being already in his interest, was to remain and work the post-office for him, up to all it knew. Accordingly, it was done; and thus terminated an intrigue which had for its object, first, the removal from around the president of every thing like Calhoun influence; and, second, by such an agitation of the political elements, purposely gotten up by Van Buren, and then his *apparently disinterested* interference to heal the difficulties, to give him an opportunity to acquire influence himself over the president. The discussion of plans, the suggestion of expedients, the necessity of interviews, all afforded excellent opportunities, and they were well improved, to become well rooted in the secret confidence of the president. This was especially needed in the choice of the new cabinet; and Van

Buren, knowing that Calhoun's interest was in the South, that the South and North was divided, and getting more so every day upon the American system, his first object was to exclude every southern man from the cabinet; and consequently, it was a great point gained to get rid of Branch and Berrien. His next plan was to have their places filled from the North, and this was effectually done. With this arrangement he was well satisfied; and then there was but one other thing to settle, and he was ready and willing to leave the United States, to profit by the increase of character which a high foreign service might confer; leaving his political interests in the hands of well-trained friends, who were thoroughly acquainted with all his plans, and especially the vast influence he had gained over the president, which it was their special business to cherish and increase. The other matter which deeply concerned him was this: he did not believe his prospects for the presidency had so ripened as to promise success within the first term of General Jackson's service. General Jackson had repeatedly said the term of service of the president should be confined to *four years only*, had recommended an alteration of the constitution to that effect, and, by way of testifying his sincerity of his opinions on this subject, frequently sig-

nified his intention to retire at the end of his first term. To counteract this determination was all that remained for him to do before he departed, and fortunately a good opportunity presented itself to accomplish this wish.

Mr. Calhoun was still the favourite of the nation: Jackson's popularity had not become quite so overwhelming as it is now, and he had not been long enough in his office to exert what he already possessed to the serious injury of Calhoun; but the means were in operation, and daily increasing in their effect, finally to accomplish that object; and this Van Buren well knew: they could not possibly produce the desired effect within Jackson's first term. The Washington Telegraph, edited by General Duff Green, whose influence had elected General Jackson, was also very much in the interest of Mr. Calhoun. This paper, believing General Jackson was sincere in his repeated declarations of retiring at the end of four years, commenced the campaign in favour of Mr. Calhoun for the presidency, not directly, but by such regular approaches as evidently to point the course it intended to take The New York Courier, then edited by Colonel Webb, equally the friend of General Jackson and devoted to Mr. Van Buren, attacked the Telegraph for being premature in its

movements. A very warm contest ensued, and, as everybody might expect that knows any thing of General Jackson's feelings, who cannot bear to be crossed in any thing which affects his pride or vanity, he did not like the hasty step, as he called it, of the Telegraph. Van Buren was thus afforded, by this angry dispute between these two editors, formerly co-workers in the same cause, an opportunity of again infusing poison into the old man's ears. He referred to the conduct of the Telegraph as another evidence of Mr. Calhoun's want of friendship for him, and his secretly interposing obstacles in the way of his fame. Other presidents, he said, possessing the confidence of the people in a high degree, (and none stood higher in their affections than himself,) served out *their two terms;* and that, if he gave way, it would be said he had not reached the same high distinction that was enjoyed by all the republican presidents; that Mr. Calhoun's press was trying to elbow him out of the honours to which he was so justly entitled by his splendid military services; and this too, by the selfish contrivance of Mr. Calhoun, it was, to say the least of it, officious, intermeddling, and arrogant, and the president ought to give it a decided rebuke by holding on for his second term. This was enough; his feelings were aroused, his

vanity became alarmed, and the Pennsylvania convention was instantly ordered to put him again in nomination. This matter being settled to Van Buren's heart's content, he set out with a joyful state of mind on his mission to England, there to await the operation of causes (which he knew were in progress) well calculated to lay out Mr. Calhoun as cold as a wedge before the election for president, at the end of General Jackson's second term.

Independent of being one of the best political contrivers, Mr. Van Buren is one of the most fortunate men in the world; his very reverses partake of his own character—they are benefits in disguise, and it can be accounted for upon no other principle than that the devil is good to his own

After he had been in England until the meeting of the ensuing Congress, the senate rejected his nomination as minister to that court; and the consequence was, what no doubt he had long desired, that it raised the cry of persecution in his favour; and this, added to the well-laid train already prepared, as necessary to lead him to the full fruition of his wishes, has almost stamped their success with absolute certainty. Of all the agencies in operation to control any, but particularly political events, there are none so irresistibly successful as

a well-directed *sympathy* in favour of an aspirant. If I had to choose from the magazine of weapons used to advance political fortunes, there is none I should prefer to *sympathy*, especially if it be such as arises from *persecution:* this last is the very best of all; it is entirely superior to that sympathy, great as it is, which arises from poverty, long services, wounds obtained in battle, or indeed, any other kind. Persecution! why, it is a perfect charm; it seizes hold of the brains of the people like exhilarating *gas*, and when safely lodged there, it displaces reason, judgment, reflection, and every thing calculated to conduct to sober results.

Nothing could be so fortunate to Van Buren as this rejection. It put the finishing stroke to those plans so artfully laid, and which I have so fully explained, to bring over General Jackson and his powerful popularity *exclusively* to his interest, so settled and fixed as to prevent its withdrawal, even in favour of the longest and best friend he ever had in his life. General Jackson considered it an insult to himself, and from that moment he identified himself with Van Buren; and the consequences which followed show what one unfortunate step will sometimes do. Though I am very much inclined to believe that his prospects were merely hastened by that event, and that General

Jackson's influence would have done the work finally, in some other way. He was made vice-president by a caucus at Baltimore, and that caucus, among other inducements for it, and not the least, was intended to pave the way for the one that sits in May to nominate him for president, and perhaps so to revive them as in future to make them the instrument by which New York will for ever hereafter dictate the president to the people of the United States. So far as General Jackson was concerned, it was not necessary; he had been elected in express opposition to a caucus; and being in office with an avowed determination to run for a second term, unopposed by any one of his own party, no one will contend that he needed now the aid of that which he had once triumphed over: the thing is absurd. It was therefore called a caucus to nominate a president and vice-president, to have the custom established for the benefit of the little magician, when his time came round: and mark me, it will be continued until Forsyth, and Benton, and Rives are happily brought into the fold. The office-holders have their candidates now out, stall-feeding, enough of them to last ten generations, and which will as certainly come in as there is a God in heaven, unless this caucus system is broken down. I have not a single piece of property more

unconditionally mine, than does the government of the United States belong to the office-holders, under the caucus system; and their commissions might just as well run that they shall hold their offices to themselves and their heirs, and in default of heirs, to such successors as they may choose to appoint, as to suffer them to get up and perpetuate an *instrument* by which they as effectually secure the same object.

CHAPTER VIII.

We have brought the life of our hero down to the time when he is about to realize the object for which the disgusting tissue of intrigues, related in this volume, were designedly laid; and it now only remains for a virtuous people to say whether they will stand by, in a government like this—boasting to be the freest on earth, equal in its laws, pure in its principles, and young in its existence—and see such frauds and corruptions receive their reward, not in that indignation they so richly deserve, but in the full enjoyment of their original design.

It is true, General Jackson and Colonel Benton have come out with the full weight of their influence in his favour; but, as the American people are free, I trust they will think for themselves. I am a plain, common man; fought under General Jackson (and he knows I did so, I hope) bravely; but I, as well as every other humble individual, have my right of opinion in this case, as well as Jackson and Benton. I like General Jackson as a general;

but he is too passionate and arbitrary for the rule of a free people; and therefore his opinions, in civil matters, should be received with many grains of allowance. He suffers himself to be imposed upon by understrappers—men who can't look an honest man in the face. He suffers himself, by ill advice, to be lashed like the ocean into a perfect tempest. In this condition of mind he conceives and broods over resentments of the most vindictive character, against friends and enemies, indiscriminately, if it suits the insidious purpose of those who direct his fierce and unregulated passions. I have shown clearly, that under this unfortunate temperament of mind, added to the capriciousness of a wayward old man, he has been imposed upon, deceived, and abused, as to one of the best friends he ever had, and *that*, by one of his latest political enemies. That the deep interest he takes in Van Buren's election is an *unnatural one*, excited by the worst of means, in favour of a man who has no other regard for him (and so manifested the fact by going over to his support when he could do no better) than as it can be made to serve his selfish purposes. He has been duped into an unnatural alliance. There is no affinity in their dispositions or principles: one is all *openness* and *feeling*, till it becomes a fault; the other is all *slyness* and *cold calcula-*

tion, until it is almost a *virtue*. He is sticking to this man in preference to one of his longest and most bosom friends, one whom he has tried and knows to be an honest man, a sincere man, a brave man, a pure man, good and true at heart, and a patriot in soul. Does not this prove to every reflecting mind that an attachment thus formed must be laid in some strong prejudices, some violent feeling, in which reason has had nothing to do, in which the judgment has been absent, nay, in which passion alone has set the affection. If this be true, what reliance can be placed upon the recommendation of one who is himself imposed upon, and cannot act from judgment and discretion, because neither of these virtues entered into the formation of his opinions? The American people, justly proud, as they ought to be, of the right to think and choose for themselves, will pause and reflect long, before they yield to such an unnatural dictation.

As to the opinions of Colonel Benton, I have some few things to show that should make the people long distrust the correctness of them before they adopted them as their own rule of action The colonel is a very unsafe politician to be relied on where the question under consideration requires judgment or forecast. He is himself a man of very strong feelings, and consequently strong pre-

judices, easily produced from passion, and of long duration, from the same cause. Besides, it is said he is looking to the presidency himself, and is paving the way by a warm support of Van Buren to get the great state of New York, with the little magician's influence, to place him in the chair as Van's successor. He has said a good deal about New York's being entitled to the next president by reason of her being a *large northern* state; consequently, Van Buren will reciprocate the favour by saying that a *small south-western* state ought to have him next time: because *small* states have as much privilege as *large* ones, and the *south* as the *north;* and so we go. Therefore, when a witness is shown to have two such powerful passions as *prejudice* and *interest* operating upon his mind while he is testifying, his evidence should be received with great caution.

Independent of this, Colonel Benton, to say the least of it, is a little unsteady in his opinions; and I ought not to make such an assertion without supporting it by proof. The reader shall have it.

In the year 1826, the power and the patronage of the executive branch of the federal government had become, as Colonel Benton believed, too great, under the then president, John Quincy Adams. He was then in the minority of the senate; but as

a just and people-loving statesman, he determined to reduce, if he could, this dangerous influence over the liberties of the people. Accordingly, he was the organ of a report, drawn up by himself, against executive power and patronage, accompanied by six distinct bills intended to correct the existing evils. In support of his measures, among very many excellent, sound, just, and judicious remarks on that occasion, I present to the reader the following, which fell from the lips of Colonel Benton: "The whole of this great power [patronage] will centre in the president. The king of England is the 'fountain of honour:' the president of the United States is the source of patronage; he presides over the entire system of federal appointments, jobs, and contracts; he has 'power' over the 'support' of the individuals who administer the system; he chooses from the circle of his friends and supporters, and *may* dismiss them, and upon all the principles of human action, *will* dismiss them, as often as they *disappoint* his expectations; his spirit will animate their actions in all the elections to *state* and *federal* offices.

"We must look forward to the time when the public revenue will be doubled: when the civil and military officers of the federal government will be quadrupled; when its influence over individuals

will be multiplied to an indefinite extent; when the nomination of the president can carry *any man* through the senate, and his recommendation can carry *any measure* through the two houses of congress; when the principle of public action will be open and avowed—the *president wants MY vote,* and I want HIS patronage; I will vote as he wishes, and he will GIVE me the office I wish for. What will this be but the government of ONE man? And what is the government of *one* man but a *monarchy?* Names are nothing; the nature of a thing is its substance: the first Roman emperor was styled Emperor of the Republic, and the last French emperor took the same title; and their respective countries were just as essentially monarchical before as after the assumption of these titles. It cannot be denied or dissembled but that this federal government gravitates to the same point."

Now here is prophecy, not only fulfilled in many particulars, but the results have become truthful history. We have fallen upon the very times predicted; and, what was then only considered by Mr. Benton's opponents as fancy, has become melancholy facts; and yet, (would you believe it, gentle reader?) Mr. Benton not only folds his arms in perfect acquiescence, but abso-

lutely refuses his assistance to remove the existing mischiefs.

At the last session of Congress, Mr. Calhoun, for the express purpose of correcting the abuses of government resulting from the immense *power* and *patronage* of the executive branch thereof, hunted up Mr. Benton's report and bills of 1826, on the same subject; followed his path exactly, and reported one of his own bills, almost word for word: and yet, Benton was the only senator who refused to give the measure his support. What think you of this? Does this not look a little like unsteady opinions? No; Mr. Benton was then in the *minority*, against the administration; but now, he is in the *majority*, in its favour. The sign of the case being altered, alters the case. If *your* bull gored my ox, you must make compensation but if *my* bull gored your ox, I must look into the case.

But I have a still stronger case than this. Colonel Benton has hardly made a speech for the last four years that he has not lugged in General Jackson's name, for the sole purpose of praising him. In his letters, at least such as are published, to wit, the letter to the Mississippi convention, recommending Van Buren, he speaks of Jackson in the same style. The general substance of his eulogies is, that he is

the "purest patriot that ever lived," the "virtuous and unbending statesman," the "able, open, and fearless captain;" and very many such strong descriptions of fine character. Now, gentle reader, it so happens that Colonel Benton and his brother Jesse had a most rancorous and violent feud with General Jackson, in times that are passed; and it so turned out in those days, that they had a fight with swords, dirks, pistols, and other deadly weapons; General Jackson had his sword taken from him, broke upon the field of battle, and received also a ball in his arm that remained there for years, and was only extracted about four years ago, long since Colonel Benton began to think him the "purest patriot that ever lived." Now mark what a change has come over the colonel's mind. In a letter written by the colonel, shortly after the battle, to one of his friends, he thus speaks of General Jackson: "I am literally in hell here; [that is, in the vicinity of General Jackson;] the meanest wretches under heaven to contend with—liars. affidavit-makers, and shameless cowards. All the puppies of Jackson are at work on me; but they will be astonished at what will happen; for it is not them, but their master, whom I will hold accountable. The scalping-knife of Tecumpsy is mercy compared with the affidavits of these vil

lains. I am in the middle of hell, and see no alternative but to kill or be killed; for I will not crouch to Jackson; and the fact that I and my brother defeated him and his tribe, and broke his small sword in the public square, will *for ever* rankle in his bosom, and make him thirst after vengeance. [Ah! the *purest patriot*, an assassin!!] My life is in danger; nothing but a decisive duel can save me, or even give me a chance for my own existence; for it is a settled plan to turn out puppy after puppy to bully me, and when I have got into a scrape, to have me killed somehow in the scuffle, and afterwards the affidavit-makers will prove it was honourably done. I shall never be forgiven having given my opinion in favour of Wilkinson's authority last winter; and this is the root of the hell that is now turned loose against me."

How stands the case now? have I not made good the declaration that the colonel is a "little unsteady in his opinions?" If so, ought not his opinions to be received with some distrust in so important a matter as that of electing Van Buren president, with a reversionary interest in favour of the colonel?

There are some wholesome truths in this world that the people ought never to lose sight of; they would never, if they knew and understood them;

but the misfortune is, that from public men or printing presses they do not hear the truth. I am but a poor backwoods hunter, but I have been among great men long enough to see that they are not the things they are cracked up for; and when I see how many thousands of men in my situation who are deceived, my bosom swells with all sorts of feelings, to go right out through the country, to tell every man, woman, and child what a miserable set of dupes the great mass of mankind are made by the doings of what is called statesmen. The great pretence is that they are working for the good of the people; the people, God bless them! is all they go for; and yet, strange to tell, they are never satisfied till they get the people by the ears, fighting, father against son, and son against father; all their neighbourhood friendships destroyed; visiting broken up; jealousies created; warm blood and heartburning towards each other at every gathering they go to; nay, their very religious communion interrupted. Now what is all this for? Will the people reflect upon it for a moment? Why is it, let them seriously ask themselves, that we are in such utter confusion one among another? Are we benefited *personally* by it? What do we get? After thinking upon these questions for a while, let them take another view

of the matter: do they not perceive that, after all, the only persons benefited by this fuss, and wrangling, and disturbing the only relations in life in which the great mass can be happy, (I mean the friendships, the intercourse, the sociabilities of private life, the good offices between neighbour and neighbour—for the common people can't all be public men,) are none but the office-holders and office-seekers? There are hundreds of people too much of gentlemen to work; and these devise ways and means to live upon the labour of others, some by stealing, some by gambling—which is stealing of a *paler colour*, or what distillers would say, *well watered*—some by cheating, some by speculating, some by trade, traffic, and turn over; but there is a class, at which I am driving, that have devised a way that is more cunning, to say the least of it, and is more completely deceptive than all the others put together: these are office-seekers. They have contrived to make government successfully serve the purpose of supplying their wants, and to keep from work, and at the same time make the people believe that without them the government could not retain a certain set of principles for a month. We profess to have a written constitution, fully explaining all the principles of government, so simple and plain that every man

can understand them; and yet, the office-seekers take this instrument and make it to politics what the Bible is to religion. There are not offices enough for every one that wants them; for unfortunately there are more of these fair-skinned, soft-handed, broadcloth gentlemen than there ought to be, and consequently they go into the drive for an office. They take the constitution, or some law made under it, and they start a great question, which they say involves the liberties of the people; this is the everlasting cry on all the questions they raise, whether it is about opening a river or building a light-house; they soon take sides on it, and they make it a perfect game, staking all the offices of government, and upon the issue of which they win or lose a place. As I said in my preface, the votes of the people are the cards they play with; now, who shall get and play out the most of them is the great scuffle, and at it they go: they lash the people up into a perfect fury; they inflame them into madness; they make them feel all the concern and excitement that they could possibly do if their life depended upon it, or if they were to have the office which is the subject of their violent contest. Well, the matter is all over; one set of ruffle-shirt gentlemen go into the offices, and the others go to something worse, if they can find that

thing; for it is my notion that there are but very few things worse than the manner of getting many of the offices belonging to the general government, and nothing worse than the way they are used after they are got. Now, the question comes again, what has the people got by all this? they go home without a penny in their pocket, perhaps a good deal spent they could not well spare. If they would give fair play to their reflections, either around their fireside or upon their pillow, something like this would be the result: 'The hot contest of to-day, and which has lasted for months, is over. I have been to the place of voting, and had to carry a dirk for fear of getting into a scrape there: I had some violent angry disputes; cursed my wife's brother; insulted my uncle; told my father he was a tory; dared my nearest neighbour to a fight; have not been for months upon speaking terms with many of my oldest friends, and, indeed, my old schoolmates, with whom I was raised in all the agreeable sports of boyhood; my wife has been cut off, too, from visiting her nearest neighbours and oldest companions: and what is it all for? To elect a man to an office that does not benefit me one cent! I have been running after his heels, freeman as I am, and barking at his enemies like a dog, ready to tear out my neighbour's

eyes, bite off his nose, split his thumb, slit his lip, or scollop his ear; and all to put *Mr. Love-leisure* into a comfortable office, to *keep him from work*, while it does not *lighten my labour one stroke!*"

Now this is a fair sample of the whole business of elections. It is exactly the same thing in all the offices, high or low, whether it be a president or constable; it only goes through a longer process and a few more canvassings; it takes its rise in the fountain-head of the people, as great rivers do in the springs of the mountains.

I have been carried into these reflections by considering why General Jackson or Colonel Benton should be privileged, any more than any one else, to tell the people who they shall vote for as president? Are the people like my hounds, that bark when I tell them, and leave off when I stamp my foot at them; take the trail when I point the way, or come off when I blow my horn? I think not: and, surely, when they see the tricks, and changes, and stratagems, and barefaced inconsistencies of men who call themselves great men; when they hear a man call another the "purest patriot that ever lived" to-day, of which same man he said yesterday, that a certain affront he had given him "would rankle in his bosom and make him thirst after vengeance," and then insinuated that he would

take his life unfairly, they cannot but distrust the views and objects of such politicians: they cannot rely with confidence upon the opinions of men who show by their daily practices they have no confidence in their own opinions. And yet, these are the men who, for the sake of the office-holders, are recommending Martin Van Buren as the president of the United States, who has not one merit of his own to entitle him to such high distinction, against a *man* whom the people have always delighted to honour because he has always honoured the people; against a man who has never deserted them, fought side by side with General Jackson for their country and their country's rights, while Van Buren would have tamely submitted to British insult and aggression, merely to defeat Mr. Madison in his election, that De Witt Clinton might come into power and carry him into office. While White was fighting the Indians, who were murdering the women and children on the frontiers, and laying their habitations in ashes, Van Buren was snugly and safely standing up in the senate of New York, denouncing the war as unjust, unnecessary, and unwise; and consequently maintaining the principle that we ought to submit to the monstrous outrage of having our property plundered on the high seas, our citizens torn from their vessels by every petty

British captain who might think proper to do so, carried off to fight the battles of that nation, perhaps against his own countrymen, and often meeting a watery grave far away from his country, his family, and his friends.

CHAPTER IX.

Blair, of the Globe, and Ritchie, of the Enquirer, (who considers Virginia as belonging to him,) are now pushing Van Buren with all their strength and with all their souls, knowing that life and death are depending upon his success, to the kitchen cabinet and the office-holders. They know, also, that he has not a single virtue or quality that can commend him to the people, or entitle him to such a responsible trust, and therefore they seize hold of nothing but the prejudices of the people against the United States' Bank, with a view to get him through upon that hobby.

Van Buren understands, and doubtless made the arrangement, that upon that hook, and that alone his friends must strain every nerve; and therefore, to give himself the more merit to mount and ride that courser through the race, especially in Virginia, where it is in such bad odour, he sends a toast to that state, which concludes with the expression of "uncompromising hostility to the bank." Amos Kendall, who also believes that in

this bank-madness rests Van Buren's only hope, and that the people must be kept constantly alarmed and excited on the subject, has lately hatched up a famous article, and had it published in the Globe, which has been republished by the *Man* of *seven principles*, (to wit, the loaves and fishes,) headed by a great caution to the people, that death and destruction was rushing down upon them like a house a-fire; in which wonderful piece Mr. Kendall has discovered, and gives it out in inuendoes, that the cashier of the United States' Bank is the son-in-law of Judge White; that he has lately been to Washington city; that Mr. Speaker Bell, the known friend of Judge White, has always been in favour of a bank, and he has lately been at Philadelphia, having more *late reasons* to be in favour of the present bank than he ought to have; that the bank has begun to run up its loans, *very much* like its operations just before the last presidential election; that Judge White has lately broke with the administration, that is, he has on several occasions undertaken to think for himself, without consulting the kitchen cabinet; and therefore, from all these very sapient signs, Judge White has turned against his old doctrines, and is now preparing to go for the bank: and to wind up the whole matter, is so to contrive it (wonderful con-

clusion, indeed!) as to bring Mr. Clay into the house!

Now, gentle reader, put yourself in a jury-box, and consider that you are trying Judge White for his life, on the crime of changing his politics in relation to the bank, for the purpose of forwarding the views of Mr. Clay on the presidency; and also suppose you are sworn to try the case according to the evidence, would you in your conscience hang the good old man on the above testimony? Would you even hang Van Buren on it, who has changed so often, on so many questions, from whose character you might expect such a thing, who has not within any twelve hours of the last twenty-five years of his life stuck to the same set of principles? Indeed, it is testimony too weak for even the little magician; and that is putting the case in a strong point of view. I much question if the good people of New England ever hung a witch, much less a magician, on such evidence.

The fact is, this whole business about the bank is a mere trickery, it is a humbug, it is a scarecrow: it supposes that the people have no more sense than a flock of crows; that they can't tell an old pair of trowsers stuffed with corn shucks, and an old coat with its sleeves crammed with rags, both sewed together and hung up on a pole with

an old hat upon the top of it, from a real man. It proceeds upon the presumption that the people have no discernment; that they are the veriest fools in all nature, worse than rabbits, and like them can be scared with rattle-traps and white bones stuck all through the enclosures they are in the habit of robbing. Now the people ought to rise in the strength of their minds and throw off such cowardly fears; exert some thinking powers of their own; not let demagogues play upon their ignorance, and then laugh at their weakness. They will find, with all this parade and fuss about the bank, it has done and can do no more harm than state banks; and these they see, feel, handle, and touch every day of their lives: that it was established by Washington, and continued by Madison, and has furnished for them a good currency for forty years, besides collecting and paying away the government's money to the amount of four hundred millions of dollars, without the loss of even a cent. But I do not mention these things for any other purpose than to show that a great deal more is said about this matter than is either just or true. All these electioneerers never fail to alarm the people with what *will take place* if the bank is continued. Why don't they point to the same mischiefs that *have taken place?* It has been in

existence forty years, surely long enough to test the truth of their predictions. If these evils will happen *in future*, they ought *to have* happened in *past times*—for it is a universally admitted truth, that the same causes will produce the same effects, in things past, present, and to come.

The truth is, the bank is as dead as a door nail; it will never kick again, until it is regenerated and born again in the city of New York, where it is as certain to go (and mark, I make a prediction of it, and call upon every one who reads my book to remember it) as Van Buren lives, and the New York Regency continues to extend its tactics through all the states wedded to Van Buren's interest. To me it is wonderful the people of Pennsylvania do not see the trick the New York politicians are playing off upon them, to rob them of an institution so vitally important to their own great and justly favourite city, and consequently to their great producing state. The people in every other state see it, and are utterly astonished at the simplicity of a people who are not only willing to resign such a benefit, but actually assisting their insidious invaders to carry it off to their own land.

Judge White is, and always has been, opposed to the bank from constitutional scruples. He cannot change: the people have too safe a pledge of

it in the consistency and honesty of his past life. Let any man point to the single act of his whole life that will justify such an uncharitable construction upon his future course. He has never advocated it in any shape: he has never written to the mother bank to have a branch placed in his own state; he has never wanted the mother institution carried there either. Can Van Buren say as much? No; he has no constitutional difficulty on the subject: and everybody knows, if he is left to determine the adoption of a measure by its expediency, its expediency is apparent to him only so far as it promotes the interest of himself and friends; and as certain as the growth of the city of New York, the increase of the wealth of the state, and the acquisition of additional political influence are desired by *any one* who can be benefited by all or either of these objects, just so certain will Van Buren establish a great national bank in New York. Are there any so blind as not to see this? How then can the people be persuaded that Van Buren can be safely supported on account of his opposition to the bank, and Judge White distrusted on the same question? The thing is too ridiculous; and therefore I now tell the people that all they hear on this subject from Blair and Ritchie is

nothing but the *bugaboo* of an old *coat* and *breeches* hung up to scare them.

The very fact that Judge White is the people's candidate against the office-holders; that he is brought forward from the ranks of the people, as General Jackson was himself, and not from a station where official influence usually trains the candidate, by intrigue and management, to reach the presidency, has very much alarmed Mr. Van Buren and his friends. They thought Judge White could be flattered off, and commenced that mode of proceeding with unusual liberality. They called him a patriot, an honest man, a pure man, a very capable man, and one who had never soiled his spotless character with any thing like intrigue or selfishness in the pursuit of office. But that device failing, they have altered their tone; and from dark insinuations and deceitful inuendoes, they are proceeding to malicious charges.

But it will not all do; the people will have their way, and the man *they* support will triumph over a venal press and a corrupt combination of the official caucus. As soon as it was found that the people would dare to have the impudence to put up a candidate of their own, in spite of the office-holders, they determined to break them down, if they

could, with a convention at Baltimore, and gave out that the convention would determine between the claims of the respective candidates of the democratic party. They now call White the candidate of the enemies of the administration, and disown him as belonging to the republican ranks, and yet are going to settle his claims with those of Van Buren! In the name of common sense, what chance will he have at the convention, composed entirely of individuals who call him a traitor to, and deserter from, the republican party? Caucuses settle disputes only as between member of their own party; and as Judge White is rejected from the party, for having the effrontery to suffer the people to put him up in opposition to Van Buren, how dare the caucus to consider his name as before them for the purpose of ascertaining the relative merits between him and Van Buren? Every one sees and knows the object; it is to cheat the people with the idea that the Jackson party have got together; and for the sake of keeping the party united, and preaching the necessity of union, and sticking to the principles of the party, and all that farrago, they will come out with a long address and resolutions recommending Martin Van Buren

for the presidency, and Richard M. Johnson for the vice-president, (to get Kentucky,) overlooking the claims of William C. Rives. They would rather run the risk of losing Virginia, which, they know, prefers William C. Rives for president, than to lose Kentucky. Well, let them try it.

As great confidence, however, as they place in the virtue of a caucus, yet they have some misgivings as to complete success from its agency; and therefore Van Buren had rather trust to his often-tried and never-failing trade of management; and the last in which he has been engaged, is very little behind any of his previous best performances. I trust, however, it will not have the same success. It took place on the night of the adjournment of Congress, and was well laid, though badly executed. It is said to have been conceived by the joint operation of Van Buren and Forsyth, and executed by Cambreling, but so badly as to have not only failed in its object, but will recoil upon the jugglers, if there is virtue enough in the country properly to appreciate such infamous trickery

Some ten or fifteen days before Congress adjourned, or perhaps longer, the house of representatives passed what was called the fortification

bill—the bill annually passed to make appropriations of public money for building and repairing fortifications, which amounted to four hundred and thirty-nine thousand dollars. The senate, after adding to it four hundred and thirty thousand dollars, at the instance of the different departments of government, for furnishing and arming those fortifications, showing a perfect readiness to comply with the wishes and to satisfy the supposed wants of the government, passed the bill and sent it back to the house on the 24th of February, being seven days before the adjournment of Congress. It is well known the administration had a decided majority in the house, and could take up and pass any bill they might think proper; but instead of doing that, in relation to this bill, they let it lay on the table, no doubt for the very express purpose which, I shall presently show, the bill was made to subserve.

The committee of foreign relations, to which was referred that part of the president's message that recommended reprisals on the commerce of France, had determined to make no report on the subject, though urgently pressed by Mr. Patton and Mr. Adams. They were determined not to agree with the senate, but felt a strong inclination, if not to support the president in his hasty and

uncalled-for recommendation, at least so to justify him as not to let him lose any of his overgrown popularity with the people. There was a strong party in the house entertaining a similar temper, but were afraid of their constituents; for, perhaps, in no proposed measure of the president was he so little sustained by the people as in his wild project of war with the French nation. This was manifest throughout the whole country, and fortunately for it, was reflected back upon Congress. The administration party felt the awkwardness of their situation: they liked their master, but they liked themselves better; they would very willingly have gratified his pride with a war, but they feared it would be at the expense of their seats; and therefore, while they would not grant the power of making reprisals, they were determined, as far as inflammatory speeches and boasting resolutions would go to prop up the president in his foolish course, he should have them. These did not incur much responsibility, and could be very satisfactorily explained when they reached home; producing no war, they produced no harm.

An occasion was necessary for the above purpose; and therefore, to give the committee of foreign relations an opportunity to reverse their determination not to report, the president sent in

a message on the Friday before the Tuesday on which Congress was obliged to adjourn, accompanied with the correspondence of Mr. Livingston with the French government, since the receipt of the president's annual message in France. This communication was referred to the committee on foreign relations, and they promised to report on the next day, which was accordingly done, and the same was postponed to Monday, the day before Congress was to adjourn, the fortification bill still sleeping upon the table.

The report of the committee contained three resolutions:—1. That it would be incompatible with the rights and honour of the United States *further to negotiate* in relation to the treaty entered into by France, on the 4th of July, 1831; and this house will insist upon its execution, as ratified by both governments. 2. That the committee of foreign affairs be discharged from the further consideration of the subject. 3. That *contingent preparation* ought to be made to meet any emergency growing out of our relations with France.

It will be plainly perceived that these resolutions went as far as they could possibly go to involve us in war, without an actual declaration. They contained the identical measures

which immediately precede actual hostilities, viz. a total rupture of negotiations, and a prepaartion for war. Mr. Adams, who supported the administration in this measure, could not go the cessation of negotiation, nor indeed, a contingent preparation for battle, and therefore he submitted an amendment which merely insisted on the treaty without any alteration. The temper of the house was soon manifested against the report, though there were some fiery administration blades drawn in its support, merely intended to flatter their old chieftain and prepare the way for an appointment, as their constituents had relieved some of them from any further cares in the business of legislation. Upon the final issue of the question, the report was rejected, and a simple short resolution passed, expressive of the sense of the house, that the treaty they believed to be just, and ought to be insisted on, but the mode and manner was left perfectly indefinite. Now, here was a final decision of this important question, upon full discussion, in which the house declared, by the rejection of the report, *unanimously*, that contingent preparation to meet any emergency growing out of our relations with France, was *unnecessary*. Then wherefore the necessity of bringing this subject before the house again? It was to answer a poli-

tical purpose. The administration party believed they could not go to war upon the strength of their own personal popularity, but that the president could; and that if, under the specious pretence of putting the country in a state of defence—a matter the people can never well object to—they could throw the whole treasury into the hands of the executive for that object, it would be a very easy matter for him to superinduce hostilities, if, from any political considerations, it should be desirable to do so.

Accordingly, the fortification bill, kept for that very purpose, was brought up on the last night of the session, and an amendment was added to the senate's amendment, before mentioned, the purport of which was, to give to the president three millions of dollars to place the country in a proper state of defence.

This proposition, as might be expected, produced a deep sensation. It was impossible to conceive what object a party could have in such a measure, when they had only the evening before unanimously declared that *preparations* were unnecessary. So it was, it passed, and went to the senate, where it was promptly rejected, *Judge White voting for its rejection.* Upon its return to the house, they insisted on their amendment.

A committee of conference resulted from the disagreement between the two houses. When they met, the senate's committee insisted on these principles: That if an appropriation was made, it should be in conformity with the spirit of the constitution; that it should be so specific as to ensure the necessary responsibility for a proper and judicious expenditure thereof; and to that end they were willing to a further appropriation of eight hundred thousand dollars for the two following specific objects: 1. Three hundred thousand as an additional appropriation for arming the fortifications of the United States; 2. Five hundred thousand as an additional appropriation for the repairs and equipment of the ships of war of the United States. This compromise was effected after some discussion, but finally without a dissenting vote.

The committee of conference dissolved, and the chairman of each committee from the two houses was ordered to report the result of their proceedings to his respective house. Mr. Cambreling was the chairman of the house of representatives; and the manner of his acting I now give from a publication of the facts, in which he and his abettors are called on to deny them, if they dare; and they shall be substantiated, says the writer, if the parties shall venture to do so.

When he left the committee of conference, after its dissolution, he returned to the house, and determined to report the result for its consideration. "On entering the door on the left hand of the speaker's chair, or immediately afterwards, he encountered the vice-president and the secretary of state, one or both of whom addressed him nearly in these words: 'What have you done with the amendment to the fortification bill?' Mr. Cambreling replied, 'The committee of conference have agreed to substitute a *specific* appropriation of eight hundred thousand dollars for the three million; and I am instructed to report it to the house.' Mr. Forsyth or Mr. Van Buren, or both of them, sneered at the unexpected information of their chairman of foreign relations, and inquired of him, in an obvious tone of rebuke, 'Why did you agree to a conference? What is eight hundred thousand dollars? The proposition is ridiculous.'"

The writer, after stating that the above is *substantially* what took place, and that he stands ready to prove it by three persons who heard it, proceeds as follows: "After this *admonition*, Mr. Cambreling resumed his seat in silence; and until the house was reminded of it, by a resolution from the senate, requesting to be informed of the disposition of the report, the honourable chairman

sedulously withheld the bill from his associate conferrees. He at length rose and refused to report it, on the grounds of the lateness of the hour and the thinness of the house. Mr. Parker of New Jersey, and Mr. Barringer of North Carolina, protested against the gentleman's reasons, and demanded the report. Mr. Lewis of Alabama, one of the conferrees, proposed to present the report, since the chairman had declined to do his duty, and accordingly sent the bill to the clerk's desk. Mr. Cambreling objected to the reception of it by the house, as he observed there was not a quorum present. Mr. Lewis then moved a *call* of the house; and the proud representative of the views and wishes of your 'favourite son' [this letter was addressed to a citizen of New York] protested against the right of sustaining the call, and demanded to know 'what member will answer to his name?' This hint was sufficient; the watch-word passed through the ranks of 'the faithful,' who, in dutiful submission, bowed to the reflected mandate of their master."

The lateness of the hour and the want of a quorum were only miserable pretexts for preventing the action of the house on the report. Cambreling had got his cue from Van Buren and Forsyth at the door, and the thing was to be defeated. Yes,

gentle reader, Cambreling voted for the Cumberland road bill, by which he gave six hundred and forty-six thousand dollars of the public money to that object, *after* he had *himself* objected to the lateness of the hour, and a cessation of his official character, as a reason for not making one of the most important reports that could come before the house; the failure to do which, involved the loss of a no less object than the whole fortification bill. And further, after his 'good and true men' had refused to answer upon a call of the house, a count was made by himself and Mr. Lewis, the result of which showed the number of one hundred and fourteen members in their seats; and it can be proved, for the fact was ascertained, and the names of the persons noted, that there were sixteen administration members walking about within the chamber, but without the bar of the house, making, when added to the above, ten more than a quorum, who could not be made to come within the bar; and so tumultuous had the proceedings of the house become, that they actually defied the authority of the speaker, and the house broke up in perfect disorder. Now what was all this for? I will tell the reader. To effect the loss of the bill, and to throw the blame on the senate. As soon as Van Buren found that Judge White had voted

against placing in the hands of the president,—uncalled-for by him, at the last hour of the session, without any of the usual estimates for such an immense appropriation, without specifying *how* or *for what* particular objects it was to be used, contrary to all former usages of appropriating public money,—the enormous sum of three million dollars, to be disposed of as the president might think proper, Van Buren believed he had so committed himself that he could for ever destroy his prospects upon the presidency, with this vote. He believed that there were two consequences flowing from it, either of which would destroy him; but united, they were perfectly overwhelming.

1. His friends could use it to great advantage, as is proved by what has lately appeared in the Globe, in reuniting the Jackson party on himself, by showing that Judge White had voted with the opposition, against the administration, on one of its most decried measures, and which actually involved a distrust of the honesty of the president himself, by refusing to give him the control of so large an amount of money; that the unusual sum, and the unprecedented manner of appropriating it, were no good reasons for objecting to the measure, as Judge White knew that General Jackson was too pure a patriot to make an improper use of it

By-the-by, the same reason would authorize the conferring upon General Jackson absolute power; but whatever may be the wishes of his friends on this point, such is not our constitution, or the principles of our government.

2. That the above object would be rendered doubly efficient by a total loss of the bill, inasmuch as Judge White would come in for his share of the blame with the rest of the disobedient senate, upon whom it was intended to cast the odium of defeating a bill, the object of which was to defend the country. It was believed that public indignation could be aroused to a most maddening pitch against a body who would leave the country without even the usual appropriations for defence, at a time when war was actually hovering upon our very borders, and that poor Judge White would come in for more than a Benjamin's portion of censure for such an outrageous act—censure for the act itself, and censure for deserting, as they would call it, the Jackson party, and countenancing by his vote an opposition whose sole aim was to disparage the president's fame, and disgrace his administration.

The plan was a deep one; and, but for the bungling, barefaced manner of its execution, it is more than probable it would have succeeded; but

answer, which did not admit of any thing like a fair, open, and manly course of conduct.

I have seen another reason assigned for this double-dealing conduct; and though I have no doubt it had its weight, yet the plan I have mentioned was the original one, and this other was a consequence of that, not seen at the time of first moving in the matter. It is this: the president was at the capitol, as is usual for him on the last night of the session, for the purpose of signing the bills. Just before this difficulty was settled by the committee of conference, the senate had rejected the nomination of Mr. Taney: this, added to the rejection of the three million appropriation, so excited his feelings, that, in a fit of undignified irritation, he left the capitol, under the pretext that it *was past twelve o'clock*, though it is well known that in no previous session of Congress has he ever left the house till it adjourned, and has often remained till near daybreak. His friends, and those concerned in the intrigue, found an additional motive in this act of the president, to defeat the bill; for, if perchance the house should agree to the report, the responsibility of its loss would fall upon the president; because, having left the capitol in a pet, and pronouncing that the functions of Congress had ceased,

by virtue of the intervention of the hour of twelve o'clock, he could not take back this decision, and consequently the bill would lose his signature. I repeat, therefore, this was a cause of opposition to the report, arising after the original intrigue had made considerable progress towards its accomplishment.

It will be obvious to the reader that I have only been able to glance at the great events connected with the life of our hero : there is none, however, in which he has taken part, that is not imbued with the true spirit of his character ; first, not to be committed on either side, until he has well weighed the probabilities of success to his own personal schemes ; then, if in his choice of friends he finds he has made a mistake, not to hesitate a moment to re trace his steps and take the other side ; and, indeed, if this does not realize all it promised, to tack back again ; and so on, as long as it suits his interest.

I think I have presented much useful information to the young politician, both in the origin and frequent changes of parties in this great republic, and the facility with which great men may change from side to side without incurring that disgrace and reproach so justly due to such unblushing

inconsistency. I do not mean to say that this last will be useful as an example to be followed, but as a meanness to be shunned and despised.

There are many persons who will call my book perfect trash; will wonder how people of sense can read such nonsense. Against such I make no complaint, for in so doing I might be guilty of impiety; for I might possibly arraign the acts of intellects not altogether answerable for their operations; and we are admonished by the Scripture that he who calleth his "brother a fool is in danger of hell fire."

There are others who will say that I never wrote this book; that some one else has done it for me; that I have not education and sense enough to put together such a work. To such, and especially if they be good Jackson men, I would say, have a caution how you use such expressions, for I well recollect when it was *said*, and *believed* by a great many *weak folks*, to be sure, that *General Jackson* did not *write his own messages*. At this day, no one can be found silly or malicious enough to make any such insinuation. And the way it was discovered that he did actually write his own messages is very curious indeed, and goes to show how guarded people ought to be in ascribing an author's writings to other pens. It was this: when the

president wrote his famous proclamation—a paper of *his usual* brilliancy of composition, rather exceeding his former productions, in consequence of the nature of the subject—some said it was written by Livingston; others, by Lewis McLean; but Tom Ritchie, who finds out every thing, published in his *Truth-teller*, "that he had seen a man who saw a man in Washington city, that told him he had seen another man who said he saw the notes of the proclamation in the *president's own handwriting*." This was proof conclusive; so that when the *president wrote* that long and able *exposition* of the *constitutional powers* of the federal government, accompanying his message recommending the force bill, in which he displayed so much *deep legal learning*, such *extensive research*, frequently using such expressions as this, "*I* find by such authorities," "*I* draw my deductions," "*I* am of opinion," "*I* come to this conclusion,"—no one has ever doubted since, upon his own authority as above shown, confirmed by Ritchie's point blank proof, that he is the author of every great state paper that bears his name. Now why may I not be the author of my own works? I use the word "*I*," as well as General Jackson. No, no, people must not think that

because Me and General Jackson had no education and come from nothing, we can't write. The very fact that we have risen in the world from such an unpromising beginning, shows we have strong minds; and it only requires a little mixing with scholars to get a sharp notion of putting one's ideas upon paper.

Be this as it may, all I ask is, not to regard the author or his language: the only real question for the reader is, Are the author's *facts true?* If they are *false*, he and they ought to be condemned; but if they are *true*, he and they ought to have their proper influence, though they should spring from the brain and pen of the most illiterate man in all the world. I repeat, the candour and the conscience of the reader is all I ask.

It is usual to sum up the character whose life is written, by a short description of his mind and person. As a substitute for this last duty of an author, I beg leave to conclude my memoir with the following extract from an elegant writer:

"Always suspect a man who affects great softness of manner, an unruffled evenness of temper, and an enunciation studied and slow. These things are unnatural, and speak a degree of mental discipline into which he that has no purpose of craft or

design to answer cannot submit to drill himself. The most successful knaves are usually of this description, as smooth as razors dipt in oil, and as sharp. They affect the softness of the dove, which they have not, in order to hide the cunning of the serpent, which they have."

THE END.

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